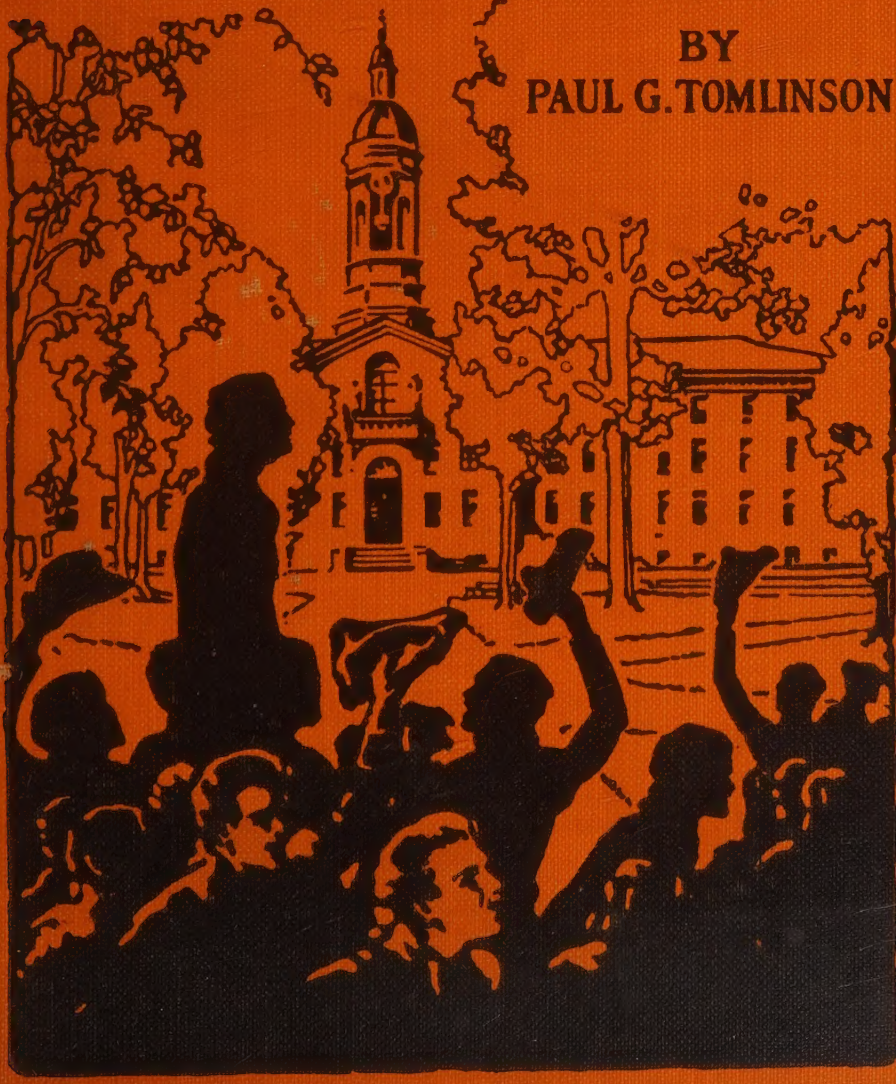
A PRINCETON BOY UNDER THE KING

BY

PAUL G. TOMLINSON



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University
1923.

A PRINCETON BOY UNDER THE KING

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BY

PAUL G. TOMLINSON

AUTHOR OF "THE TRAIL OF TECUMSEH," "THE STRANGE GRAY CANOE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
LESLIE CRUMP

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PREFACE

When Princeton boys lived under the king, the college was a very different institution from what it is at the present time. In 1756-1760 the period covered by this story the College of New Jersey boasted of only one building, Nassau Hall. Princeton University still boasts of Nassau Hall, but its students do not live there, eat there, and recite there as they did in colonial days. And the kind of lives led by college boys in that early period of American history were far removed from the doings of modern university students, although the boys themselves probably have not changed as much as their surroundings in the hundred and sixty-odd years that have elapsed since the College of New Jersey removed from Newark to Prince Town. In this story I have tried to picture them as they lived and worked together in Nassau Hall under Presidents Aaron Burr,

Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Davies. For the historical facts I have depended upon original diaries, contemporary accounts, and histories of the college and the town. I have tried hard, however, to make the history subordinate to the story; in other words, to furnish history without the readers being entirely conscious of it.

In a second volume I shall treat of Princeton during the War of the Revolution, when the town was the scene of hot fighting, and Nassau Hall for some months the seat of the Continental Congress. In still other volumes I shall hope to picture successive periods of Princeton's history until the present time is reached. My hope is to present in this way an outline of Princeton's history, and the history of Princeton is inextricably entwined with the history of the United States of America.

A Princeton boy who lived under the King would be a curiosity if he appeared on the campus to-day, but given the same opportunities as his descendants I am sure he would furnish them stiff competition on the athletic field. In the class-room his knowledge would not be as varied as theirs, but allowed to compete in the

subjects he was taught he could put them to shame.

PAUL G. TOMLINSON.

Princeton, New Jersey,
July, 1921.

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CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDING OF NASSAU HALL

It was the afternoon of October 22, 1756. The day was warm and the drowzy haze of Indian summer hung over the little village of Newark, in the Province of East Jersey, disturbed only occasionally by a breath of wind from the salt meadows which lined the banks of the nearby Passaic. It was the kind of a day when lying under a tree, arms folded under one's head, and looking up into the whispering foliage was the occupation to be preferred above all others. The kind of a day when one wanted to lie still, to think pleasant lazy thoughts, to speculate idly about all kinds of things, and perhaps discuss these things at intervals with a friend.

At any rate these were the things two boys

sprawled out at full length under an apple tree were doing. About a hundred feet distant from where they were lying was a small, two-story frame house. A wide chimney supported it at one end, and its bricks, discolored and weather-beaten near the top, had the appearance, when seen through half-shut eyelids, of being the great red face of an ugly giant. If the giant were hungry the long low shed running out from the rear of the house contained firewood enough to satisfy his craving all winter. There was no porch on the house, but its bare and rather forbidding front view was relieved by a few clusters of flowers growing around the door sill and near the windows, pinks, marigolds, and asters. A path led from the doorway through a small orchard of fifteen apple trees to the narrow, dusty wagon-track which served as a thoroughfare for the residents of that section of Newark.

One of the boys under the tree roused himself presently and raised his head to watch a [illegible] on horseback canter past. A cloud of red [illegible] arose from the ground with every step the horse took and hung for a moment in the still air to settle again gradually to earth.

"If we have a day like this when we move the college to Prince Town it is going to be far from a pleasant ride," he remarked after a moment.

"We'll be lucky if it is not worse than this," his companion replied. "November days in this part of the colonies are usually beautiful or horrible. If we should happen to strike rainy weather the roads will be almost impassable. We shall get in this Jersey mud to the hubs if we go by coach. I personally feel it would be more prudent to go by horseback."

The first speaker was a stockily built young man of possibly sixteen years. His hair was slightly reddish, and his eyes of that blue-gray color that matches so well the clouds which float above the highlands of Scotland on a summer day. It was from Scotland that this boy's parents had come before he was born. Of a sturdy race themselves, their eldest son, brought up in the rough life of the early settlers, had waxed strong and showed promise of a strength which in manhood maturity would eclipse that of his father. There were a few freckles scattered here and there on his sunburned face, and a few of them had apparently slipped over his shoulders and

down his arms to the back of his big bony hands. As a result of the shortness of his coat sleeves some of them were even visible on his wrists. His mouth looked always as if he were about to smile, and imparted a genial expression to his whole countenance. And yet he could be extremely serious and in fact the half-smile always disappeared from his face every time he glanced at the much-thumbed copy of Watts' "Astronomy" lying open on the grass at his side. His name was Thomas Spencer.

His companion was John Ayres, a small, sharp-featured lad a year younger than himself, with black hair, black eyes, and extraordinarily white teeth. His every movement depicted a restless nervous energy, and he snapped his words out when he talked. He had come to the College of New Jersey from Philadelphia and this was his first year. In fact he had been in attendance only a few weeks, or since the Commencement the month previous. Accordingly he did not know as much about the young institution as his friend, who lived in Elisabethtown, only five miles away, and had been acquainted with the College since its founding. But he was always eager for infor-

mation and did not possess the common fault of fearing to ask questions.

"Arrangements are made for the coach, aren't they?" he inquired.

"Everything has been provided for, I believe," said his friend. "Sam Pierson was to see old Denby this morning and clinch the matter. It will be great fun unless we have the kind of weather you seem to predict. The King's Highway is one of the finest roads in the country ordinarily."

"It is," said John. "I found it most agreeable traveling on the way over from Philadelphia. We carried mail and though one or two were afraid of highwaymen, of course nothing happened."

Thomas laughed. "There'll be five of us besides the driver when we go. I'd like to see some one try to hold us up." His eyes shone, and rather with expectation than any appearance of alarm.

"On my way from Philadelphia," said John, "the driver told me about a place just out of Prince Town where the coach robbers are supposed to have their headquarters. It is called 'The Rock House.' Of course I don't know."

"I hope it's true anyway," exclaimed Thomas, showing more animation than he had displayed for some time. "We'll organize an expedition and investigate it some day after the college moves."

"I was unable to stop at Prince Town but I caught a glimpse of Nassau Hall," John continued. "It should be finished in a few months, and I can tell you it is a magnificent structure. Is it true that it is the largest building in the colonies to-day?"

"Without question. And one of your fellow townsmen is the architect, you know."

"Yes, Mr. Robert Shippen, a great friend of my father."

"It will be a wonderful thing for the College of New Jersey to be housed in such a building. Neither Harvard, nor Yale, nor William and Mary, all of which were founded before our own institution, has anything to compare with it. And incidentally you know that our charter was granted just ten years ago to-day."

"I know," said John. "By Governor Lewis Morris, was it not?"

Thomas laughed. "No," he said, "not by Governor Morris. He was a staunch supporter

of the Church of England and did not favor the establishment of an institution of learning by Presbyterians, who stipulated that every one should be welcome here no matter what his religious opinions or beliefs. No, indeed, Governor Morris did not grant us a charter. It was his successor, the Acting Governor after his death, John Hamilton, President of His Majesty's Council and Commander in Chief of the Province of New Jersey, if you want his full title."

"Then the Reverend Jonathan Dickinson became the first president."

"He did, but he only lived about a year after the charter was granted. He died in 1747 and was buried in the Presbyterian Church cemetery over at Elisabethtown. That's where the college started, you know; it didn't come to Newark until after President Dickinson died."

"I know that," said John. "I didn't know anything much about the charter or the first president, though. Doctor Dickinson must have been a great man."

"And a busy one," exclaimed Thomas, closing the astronomy book with a sigh of satisfaction and settling himself against the trunk

of the tree. "Why in addition to being president of the college and teaching the students, he was pastor of a church, practiced law, and as if these things were not enough for one man to do, practiced medicine too."

John made no comment for some time. Finally he heaved a great sigh. "I don't see how any man could know so much," he said.

"He was a graduate of Yale," said Thomas.

"Does that explain his great knowledge?" laughed John.

"I didn't mean to imply that," said Thomas with a smile. "I was merely stating a fact. I do not think it is possible to acquire a better education anywhere in the colonies than right here under our new president, Aaron Burr. But we do owe much to Yale. Six of the seven original trustees of the college were Yale graduates, and the seventh a graduate of Harvard. President Burr himself graduated from Yale."

"We might almost be called an offshoot of Yale, mightn't we?"

"I don't know that that is strictly true," said Thomas, who loved to display his knowledge of the beginnings of the college, "although the way Dr. David Brainerd was treated at

Yale is said to have made some of that college's supporters so angry that they resolved to break with it and start an institution of their own."

"You mean David Brainerd, the famous missionary to the Indians?"

"The very man," Thomas exclaimed. "It seems he made some remarks that were not considered in keeping with the teachings of religion, and when they were reported to the authorities at Yale he was not allowed to take his degree."

"Pretty severe punishment, it seems to me," said John.

"And others thought so too. That's why they wanted to start a college of their own where a man could believe what he wanted to. I say this because last Sunday evening when some of us were gathered at Dr. Scott's after prayers I heard President Burr say as much himself."

"I had never heard that President Clap of Yale is at all a narrow-minded man," said John. "My father has often spoken of him in the most glowing terms. Probably he would have wished me to attend Yale were it not so distant from Philadelphia."

"There you've struck it to my way of thinking," cried Thomas, leaning forward and bringing his hand down sharply upon the book, "Yale is too far away for students to attend from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. A college was needed in the middle colonies. That is the real reason the College of New Jersey was founded, I believe, although the Brainerd trouble may have furnished the excuse."

"And we can thank John Hamilton for the charter."

"Yes, but we got a second charter from Governor Belcher two years later. Some people said our original charter was invalid because Hamilton was old and not responsible when it was granted. So the trustees applied to Governor Belcher for another and he granted it in the name of the King eight years ago, soon after he came over from London to take Hamilton's place. Governor Belcher has been an enthusiastic friend and supporter of ours from the start. He did a great deal to help us in getting Nassau Hall."

"I should have thought they would have named it after him."

"They tried to," said Thomas. "They

wanted to call it Belcher Hall, but the governor would not hear of it. In the speech he made declining the honor he made the suggestion that it be named in honor of King William the Third, who, as you know, belonged to the House of Nassau. So long as he wanted this done the trustees were agreeable and thus the college was called 'Nassau Hall.' "

"A dignified name," said John, "and one that I trust will some day be famous."

At that moment the door of the nearby house opened and disclosed a buxom, kindly-faced woman of about forty years of age. Around her head was a large handkerchief, obviously to keep the dust out of her hair for she leaned her right hand on a broom.

"Tom Spencer," she called shrilly, "the next time you come into my house and track dirt over my clean floors there's to be trouble. Are you too tired to scrape your boots when you come home from the court house?"

Her voice sounded angry, but Thomas did not seem to be worried. He rose to his feet, placed his left arm over his heart, swept his cap from his head with his right hand, and bowed low.

"Mistress Kennedy," he exclaimed in the politest tones he could summon, "you know that if I were the guilty party I should have removed the stains myself. Do you think that I would track dirt into the home of the most amiable, the most charming, the most obliging, and the prettiest landlady in the town of Newark; and then go away and permit her to stain her lovely hands with the task of removing it? Why, Mistress Kennedy."

"Go on, ye rascal!" she exclaimed, beaming from ear to ear. "Stop your flatterin' of me. You know who tracked that dirt in as well as I do."

"But, Mistress Kennedy, you don't think I'd tell on Mr. Ayres, do you? He has only been here a short time and I should not like to have him incur your ire if it can be avoided."

"No, now Mr. Ayres didn't do it at all," said the smiling landlady. "If you was only as neat as him I would have little to do. If all the students was like him I'd be sorry the college was moving away, but I can't say I'll miss you much."

This was not true, for Mrs. Kennedy was devoted to young Thomas Spencer. He made her

work as she said, but she would have done twice as much for him without complaint had it been necessary. Sometimes, as at present, she tried to scold him, but she seldom had much success, and now she slammed the door and disappeared inside when Thomas, pretending to be hurt at her words, pulled out his handkerchief and began to wipe his eyes. "He's incorrigible," she muttered.

CHAPTER II

PRESIDENT AARON BURR

The following morning at half past six John Ayres walked through the orchard in front of Mrs. Kennedy's house where he and Thomas Spencer boarded at the rate of twelve pounds a year apiece. He was on his way to the court house to recite to President Burr on the works of the Greek author Xenophon, at seven o'clock, and the president did not permit tardiness at recitations. Under his leadership the College of New Jersey had prospered, and there were now about seventy students in attendance. Not having any college buildings it was a knotty problem how to provide lodging and board for them, and to find a place where recitations could be held. The first part of the problem was unsatisfactorily solved by having the students board with private families in the town, and the second by permission being granted the College to hold its class-room exercises in in the county court house.

Mr. Prime had been talking with John about this only a few days previous. Mr. Benjamin Y. Prime was one of the tutors who assisted the president in teaching. His initials being B and Y, he was familiarly known to the students as "By" Prime. None of them dared speak this nickname in public, however, for nicknames were strictly forbidden by the laws of the college, and rendered the user liable to suspension. In the case of Mr. Prime, however, there was meant no disrespect, for he was admired and well liked by all the students. He, with the other tutor, Mr. John Ewing, assisted President Burr in the instruction of the students and these three men composed the faculty of the college.

John enjoyed the classes conducted by President Burr. They were always intensely interesting, and the students could not help but absorb some of the enthusiasm with which the youthful president was so plentifully endued. He was a born teacher, and got results because he not only enjoyed teaching but showed his enjoyment plainly. Before the College of New Jersey was founded he had established a classical school at Newark for the benefit of the young men of the church of which he was pastor.

When Jonathan Dickinson died and he became head of the young institution he had of course given up this school, and thrown himself heart and soul into his new work. In fact, for the first three years of his presidency he had received no pay. But this circumstance did not make him work any the less. And as John looked at him now, seated on the platform at the end of the small room adjoining the court-room, he was struck by his haggard and tired appearance; his face was drawn, his eyes were ringed with deep circles, and his manner seemed listless, a circumstance so unusual as to be noticeable. Consequently he was not surprised when he presently complained of feeling ill, and dismissed the class before the allotted time had expired.

"The president looks badly," said Henry Stirling, a friend and classmate of John, as they walked away from the court house.

"Badly indeed," said John. "His look worries me."

"He has been working too hard."

"Too bad he can't give up the teaching for a time until the college is removed to Prince Town and settled there."

"You are right," Henry exclaimed. "Trying to raise funds, to teach, and to direct the building of Nassau Hall are tasks too great for one man to attempt."

"It seems to me," said John in his brusque, sharp manner, "that if the college needs money the thing to do is to have a lottery. Nearly every one will buy a lottery ticket on the chance of gain."

Henry Stirling turned his blue eyes on John's face. "My dear boy," he said with a bitter smile, "don't you know that the board of trustees have petitioned the Assembly any number of times for permission to hold a lottery for the college, and every time they are turned back with a curt refusal. Representatives of the trustees have appeared before the Assembly at Perth Amboy in person. I know because I live there, and I also know that their petitioning the Assembly does no good."

"A lottery was drawn in Philadelphia for the benefit of the college seven or eight years ago."

"But that is not New Jersey, and at any rate I'll wager the college got little from it. Why, I've heard that a large portion of the tickets were sold on credit and that few of the

people ever paid. Can you imagine such a thing? Personally I believe that when a gentleman gives his word that should be sufficient. A lottery ticket is not exactly the same as a gambling debt, of course, but it should be treated in the same way, as a debt of honor and paid promptly." Henry lowered his voice. "Last evening, for instance, I lost over a pound at cards. I haven't got the money and in consequence I shall have to borrow it until the next instalment of my allowance is due." He looked at John hopefully. "You couldn't spare that much for a fortnight, could you?"

"Sorry," said John, "but my own funds are very low. Anyway, Henry, you ought not to gamble at cards. It is against the teachings of the church, and besides you know what would happen to you if President Burr or one of the tutors or trustees heard of it."

"But how can they?" demanded Henry, who seemed to prefer to discuss John's second objection and ignore the first. "Here we are boarding in houses scattered all over the village. It is impossible for any one to watch us with any success. Trust me not to get caught."

"It takes time that you should spend in

study," objected John, still hopeful of finding some argument that would have an effect.

"Quite right," Henry agreed glibly. "But it's a question whether cards or books are more profitable, when my luck is good. Last evening it was evil and books would have been more profitable. But my luck is good so far to-day, for my brain is addled and I should have had a difficult time if President Burr had called upon me for a recitation. Particularly if he had switched from Xenophon to the New Testament as he does sometimes, and had asked me to translate any of that Greek into Latin. For his sake I am sorry he is sick, but you know the saying about the ill wind that blows nobody good."

"Henry, you're incorrigible," cried John, and this word in its colloquial sense described his friend very well indeed; an attractive, irresponsible boy, with charming manners, careless rather than bad habits, and spirits which could not be low for longer than a very short time, he was a universal favorite with the student body.

This in spite of the fact that many did not approve of him. In those days most of the

boys who went to college did so with the intention of preparing themselves for the ministry. This was John's intention, but Henry somehow did not seem drawn to this work. His main purpose and aim in life at the present moment seemed to be to have a good time. His mother was dead, and his father, a well-to-do merchant, gave his only son his own way in practically everything. He supplied him with a generous allowance and asked only—or at least so it seemed—that his boy keep up in his studies. This was easy enough for Henry Stirling; lessons came easily to him and though he spent less time in their preparation than most, he usually stood well up in his class. Ontology was his favorite study and he was credited by some of the students with a better knowledge of the subject than Watts himself, author of the famous textbook. But it was a question whether young Stirling's aptitude for acquiring knowledge easily was an advantage or not; sometimes things which come too easily are not appreciated and do not last very long.

Whatever else Henry was, however, he was attractive, and every one liked him, liked his smile, his conversation, and his company gen-

erally. As he and John Ayres walked along the well-worn footpath bordering the dusty village street that October morning the people they met all had a smile for him and a pleasant word; and this was the case whether the passersby were on foot, on horseback, or driving. He knew them all, and they all knew him.

"I don't mean to be flippant about President Burr," he said to John. "You know perfectly well that I'm sorry he's sick. I've noticed very often of late that he is not looking well."

"Tom Spencer says it is the frequent trips to Prince Town which are tiring him."

"I shouldn't be surprised. And sometimes he has gone there and back in two days. Now, I say that Newark to Prince Town and return is entirely too long a ride for a man of President Burr's age to take in that short time."

"How old is he?"

"He must be forty at least. A man isn't as strong when he gets to be that old as he was once."

"Right you are," said John. "I hope that when the college is removed to Prince Town and once established there that he will have a chance to rest."

"And make up more rules for the students to break," laughed Henry. "If he should know about my game of cards last night I suppose I would be fined the customary five shillings for the first offense. I wonder, by the way, if 'first offense' means the first time you break the rule against card playing or the first time you get caught? I've played often enough, but I've never been caught, and I'm glad we were not found out last night. I lost enough without having a fine to pay besides."

"You know what happens if you're caught the second time, don't you?"

Henry made a wry face. "Oh, yes, public warning, and expulsion the third time. I signed the rules of the college when I entered just like every one else. I know every one of them, and that's why it is easy for me to break them and not get caught. It's the fellow who is ignorant of them who is liable to make mistakes which are fatal."

John could not help smiling at this reasoning. But he knew that there was considerable truth in his friend's remarks. Certainly Henry Stirling seldom got into difficulties as the result

of ignorance of what he was doing. He was far too clever for that.

"With whom were you playing?" asked John.

"You won't tell?" Henry glanced at him sharply.

"Of course not," cried John. "Do you think I'd ask such a question and then tattle on you when you answered it?"

"Forgive me," said Henry quickly. "I should have known better than to ask such a question. There were four of us in all, Ezra Whitaker, George Dodd, and Hugh Harris besides myself. Hugh won money from every one of us. He is too lucky for words. I suppose he'll write a poem about it." He laughed.

"He does write poetry, doesn't he?" said John.

"And very creditable verse too. He's in love, that's the answer, of course." Henry by the tone of his voice showed that in his estimation being in love was a poor pastime for any able-bodied young man. "Huh," he snorted.

"You know the saying, don't you?" queried John, " 'Lucky at cards, unlucky in love.' His success at cards last night should cause him worry."

"Well I must say that it worries me," said Henry with emphasis. "I wish he were luckier with his game of love if that would change his luck at cards. Since the term opened I have handed over to him about half of my allowance."

"Why don't you stop it then? That's easy."

"Not so easy as you think when you are behind. Perhaps when I get back the money I have lost I'll quit it then."

"That's what they all say," exclaimed John scornfully. "You know as well as I do that the only time to stop is now. Setting some future date is absolutely fatal."

"You are very convincing, John," said Henry with a twinkle in his eye. "You should make an excellent minister. Meanwhile I must find a pound with which to pay Hugh Harris. Who do you think is the best prospect? I swore I'd pay him to-day."

"Why don't you ask your landlady?"

"Mrs. Caxton?" exclaimed Henry with a laugh. "She's as miserly as her food is bad. Why she'd just as soon cut her right arm off as to lend me money. Besides that she hates me, and only yesterday she was kind enough to in-

form me that she had seen me coming out of a tavern last Thursday night and had a notion of reporting me to Mr. Prime."

"What have you done to make her dislike you so strongly?"

"Oh, she dislikes everybody," said Henry. "Perhaps she hates me worse than most, but she's pretty much down on all the human inhabitants of the world. I'll be glad when we move to Prince Town and I'm rid of her."

"Not a very good prospect for you to borrow money from, I should say," laughed John.

"But here's the man," exclaimed Henry suddenly. They were approaching a low wooden building with a sign over the doorway which proclaimed to the passing world that inside John Kirkpatrick did horseshoeing. The sound of ringing blows on the anvil heard a considerable distance away unquestionably would have made this fact clear anyway, but the sign done in red and white was, next to his profession, the pride of the burly blacksmith's heart. Every one who brought a horse to Kirkpatrick was obliged to listen to the story of the sign, how it was probably the best in the whole colony, how its design was the blacksmith's own,

and how much it had cost. On a background of white, large red letters announced the name of the proprietor, while at one end of the name was the picture, also in red, of a highstepping horse, his steps higher than his pedigree probably, for his creator had scarcely done the breed of horses justice in his delineation of this particular specimen. His neck seemed unnecessarily long to the unbiased observer, and his legs and body did not seem to have been designed for the same animal. However, Kirkpatrick was a biased observer and he was perfectly satisfied with the vermilion steed. At the opposite end of his name as it appeared on the sign, balancing the picture of the horse, were printed a number of small horseshoes so arranged as to form the initials J. K. one above the other. An exceptional sign certainly.

As Henry and John approached the shop there emerged from within a small red-faced man, wearing a cap, a shabby green coat, and riding boots. He tapped his right leg with a riding whip with every step he took, and so kept time with his footsteps. He was a little too stout for his coat which, buttoned tightly around his waist, seemed to threaten constantly

to fly apart. This circumstance did not seem to worry him in the least, however, for his countenance radiated good humor, and even his gray hair seemed to have a halo of benignity about it.

"Denby," exclaimed Henry, "I am as glad to see you as I would be to see King George himself. I trust you are very well."

The little man grinned broadly. "Good morning, Mr. Stirling," he exclaimed. "I hope I see you well this morning, and what can I do for you?"

"A great favor," said Henry earnestly. "I am in need of money."

"I thought so," cried Denby with a chuckle. "When people tell me they are as glad to see me as if I were His Majesty himself it usually means money."

"You do me an injustice," said Henry, affecting an injured air.

"No offense, sir," said Denby, his eyes twinkling. "I was not referring to you, sir."

Henry laughed. "There's no use in trying to fool you, Denby. Of course I am always glad to see you, as you know, but it does happen that meeting you this particular morning I am particularly happy to do so if our meeting should

CHAPTER III

THE START FOR PRINCE TOWN

The cold wind swept in from Newark Bay and the adjoining waters which separated Staten Island from the mainland of the Province of East Jersey. With it came rain, fine needle drops which the wind hurled in handfuls into the faces of those persons whom duty called abroad on such a day, or against the window panes of the dripping houses, as if it were spiteful of the log fires burning within and would like to deny the inmates the warmth and cheer the blazes afforded. The sky was leaden and dark, the low-lying clouds heavy with rain, wind and cold. The air was damp and penetrating and the unfortunate person obliged to be outdoors shivered no matter how warmly he was dressed or how vigorously he walked. The trees, already pretty well stripped of their foliage, were fast losing their few remaining leaves, which dropped heavily to the ground like water-soaked bits of paper. Huge puddles lined the

streets, pitfalls for the unwary walker who did not use extreme care in the selection of solid bits of earth for his mud-spattered boots.

"I doubt if we should start," said Denby. With the tips of his fingers he rubbed on the dirty window pane of the livery stable and peered out at the bleak November day. "I would not wager that we can get over the roads at all in weather like this."

"But we must," exclaimed Henry Stirling. "We have made all arrangements. It is too late to change our plans now."

"Your landladies will keep you one more day, won't they?" said Denby.

"Mine won't if I can help it," said Henry grimly. "I'd rather spend the night out in the cold and the rain than go back to that Caxton woman."

"Well, if you start for Prince Town to-day you may not only spend to-night out in the cold and the rain, but in the mud as well," said Denby dourly. " 'Tis an awful bad day, and I think 'twould be a mistake to try it. Besides, I don't like to risk my horses."

"It won't hurt your horses a bit," exclaimed Samuel Pierson, one of the group of five young

men gathered in Kirkpatrick's livery stable. He it was who had had the arrangements for the trip in charge. When it came to matters of business, of driving good bargains, he was generally regarded as being without a peer among the students of the college. He was of medium height, blond, with an innocent expression which belied the shrewdness only hinted at by his clear blue eyes. "You told me when I first talked with you, Denby," he continued, "that we would start to-day no matter what the weather."

The coach driver looked more worried than ever at this remark. He made no reply, but stood silent with his hands thrust deep into his trousers pockets, his glance on the floor.

"Of course," said Sam Pierson mildly, "if you are afraid your horses aren't up to the work that's a different matter entirely."

Thomas Spencer nudged John Ayres, who was standing next to him. He knew, as all the boys knew, that Joseph Denby was inordinately proud of his horses, that he often boasted that they were superior to any possessed by any liveryman in the world. A suggestion that they might not be equal to any work required of them

was practically certain of results. Samuel's thrust was a shrewd one.

Denby removed his hands from his pockets with alacrity, threw back his shoulders and greeted the five boys with a cheery smile. "We'll start in twenty minutes," he exclaimed. "It wasn't the horses I was worrying about; it was you young gentlemen being out in such beastly weather. I merely mentioned the horses because I didn't want to hurt anybody's feelings. But if none of you mind, heaven knows it's easy enough for the horses."

Immediately he was all bustle and business. The horses were led from their stalls and harnessed to the lumbering old four-wheeled coach which was to bear these five young students of the College of New Jersey to that institution's new home in Nassau Hall in the little village of Prince Town. It is difficult to dampen youthful ardor, no matter how hard it may rain, how strong the wind, or how cold the day. Here was an adventure, and Samuel Pierson, John Ayres, Thomas Spencer, Henry Stirling and Hugh Harris were eager to embark upon it. Willing hands assisted Joseph Denby in the final preparations and the allotted twenty min-

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utes had scarcely elapsed when the coach rumbled over the threshold of the livery stable and turned Westward.

The horses had emerged upon the street on a dead run. Denby always liked the impression this made upon observers. To-day, however, the pace immediately subsided to a walk and a slow one at that. The horses tugged and strained in the harness, splashed and stumbled in the puddles of water which almost obliterated the roadway, and sank knee-deep into the oozy, red mire. Denby shouted to them and cracked his whip, but they were doing their utmost and could not quicken their pace. Huddled together in the stage the five boys vainly tried to shield themselves from the elements. The rain beat in upon them, and they were soon dripping wet and collars turned high and caps pulled down over faces as far as they would go were of little avail. The cold wind chilled them through and through.

"Denby was right I think," said Hugh Harris in a low voice to his companions, after some fifteen minutes of this and only half a mile had been covered.

"Not at all," said Henry Stirling. "This is

all right. I'm so glad to be leaving Newark and starting for Nassau Hall that anything would be worth while."

They lapsed into silence. The lumbering coach rolled and pitched like a ship at sea, only the bottom of the ruts and gullies into which the wheels were thrown offered more resistance than the hollows between ocean waves, and the passengers were jostled and thumped, hurled first one way and then the other. Denby on the box had lost all his good nature; he swore and blasphemed, whipped the horses one minute and pleaded with them the next. They, poor beasts, were not to blame for the slowness of progress. They exerted all the strength they had, straining to the utmost of their power to drag the heavy stage along. Steam rose steadily from their dripping backs and flanks, their nostrils were quivering and distended, and their labored breathing could be plainly heard by the occupants of the stage.

Only once did the driver address any remarks directly to his passengers. "Put Joe Denby down for a fool if he ever takes his stage out in weather like this again," he said bitterly.

No one offered to reply and he devoted his attention to the horses again, only ignoring them for increasingly frequent pulls at a bottle of rum carried conveniently in the pocket of his great coat. As the stage got further away from Newark the road grew worse. The ground was low and marshy, the puddles increased in depth and size, the footing for the horses grew steadily more treacherous, until they were splashing and floundering and making scarcely any progress.

"Right," shouted Denby suddenly, and all five boys threw themselves hurriedly to the right side of the stage. It was the only thing that kept it from capsizing. One of the leaders had stepped into a hole and down he went on his knees. The horse behind him reared and plunged and then the other two took fright. Denby, his mind cloudy and his hands unsteady as a result of his many draughts from the rum bottle, found them unmanageable; he tugged and yanked at the reins, shouted and swore, but his efforts to straighten things out only seemed to make the tangle worse.

The stage rocked and rolled while its cold and rain-soaked passengers were hard put to

it to stay in it at all. The horses bucked and plunged, becoming more and more frightened every moment and it looked as if they might do themselves serious injury. With an exclamation of anger, Henry Stirling leaped from the stage. He alighted on all fours in the mud and water and slime, but was on his feet in an instant, making his way to the horses as fast as the condition of the ground would allow. He seized the bridle of the one which was down, helped him to his feet, spoke soothing words to the trembling, frightened animal and presently had all four of them quiet.

Then Denby jerked the reins again and the horses jumped. Henry still had his hand on the leader's bridle, and as the horses plunged forward he was jerked violently off his balance, lost his footing on the treacherous ground and fell directly under the swinging hoofs.

There was a cry of alarm from his companions. Thomas Spencer was the first to collect his wits. He sprang forward and seized the reins from Denby's partially numbed hands, braced his feet against the dashboard and pulled in with all of his strength. His action had been sudden and violent. In his assault

upon the reins he had bumped roughly into Denby, and that unfortunate individual, thoroughly bewildered and unnerved, lost his balance, clutched wildly at the air and toppled over. Over the side of the coach he went, struck the top of his head on the right front wheel and fell prone into the mud.

The remaining boys, Hugh, John and Sam, had all jumped off the stage by this time, and as if by a prearranged plan each seized the bridle and fetlock of one of the horses. None of them paid the slightest attention to Denby, who was slowly rising from the ooze and slime into which he had fallen; his face was covered with mud as if by a mask, mud dripped from his hands, mud covered him literally from head to foot. And presently a figure which looked as if it might have been his twin dragged itself from the mud and water in front of the horses, attempted to rise, slipped back, tried again and got to its feet. The horses, as a result of the four boys' efforts, now stood quietly.

"Are you hurt, Henry?" demanded John anxiously.

For answer Henry spat out a mouthful of mud and water. He rubbed the back of his left

sleeve across his face, and scraped mud and water from his hands.

"No," he said.

"Get in the stage again then, and take my coat. You must be wet to the skin."

Henry looked at the speaker quizzically. "I suppose you are warm and dry."

"Drier than you," John insisted. "Take my coat." He started to take it off.

"Keep it, please," Henry exclaimed. "I'm very grateful to you, but I couldn't think of accepting it."

He climbed back into the coach, and then spied Denby for the first time. That unfortunate individual was bending over, his hands under the water as if he were feeling for something. His footing was so slippery and his brain so befogged by the fumes of the rum he had drunk that he was continually losing his balance and falling down into the muddy water again. Then he would labor to his feet once more and continue his search.

"What's the matter, Denby?" inquired Henry, amused in spite of himself at the antics of the livery stableman. "Lost something?"

"I losht my bottle," muttered Denby, and fell down.

"Oh, is that all," laughed Henry. "Well, we can't stop for that. Get up here with me. We're starting on."

"Who's going to drive?" demanded Hugh. "Certainly not Denby."

"I c'n drive," Denby mumbled, still fumbling for his lost bottle.

"I'll drive," said Thomas. "Get aboard everybody."

"We'd better walk," said Sam Pierson. "You drive, Tom, and let Henry and Denby ride. We others better travel on foot for awhile."

"I want to walk myself in just a minute," said Henry. "First, I must scrape some of this mud off my face and clothes. Then I want to walk to get warm. Come up here, Denby."

Denby turned a mud-covered face in the direction of the speaker, and pointed at a spot close beside him where he apparently thought the bottle had fallen. He said something entirely unintelligible.

"Pick him up and put him in," ordered

Henry, busily scraping mud from his person and wringing dirty water out of his clothes.

Hugh, John and Sam were quick to take advantage of this suggestion, and sloshing their way to where Denby stood they picked him up bodily and dumped him into the stage. There he lay, limp and sodden, a drunken, inert mass of mud, reeking of rum and spirits.

"Drive on, Tom," cried John.

The rain still fell, and the cold wind still blew from the salt meadows, chilling the little band to the very marrow of their bones. So they progressed, the boys alternating at driving while the others walked. Denby lay in the coach, sunk in a sleep which defied the rain, the cold, and the bumping and rocking of the stage which swayed from side to side, pitching him first one way then another, but never waking him. More than five hours had elapsed since they had started, when finally the sorry looking cavalcade reached Elisabethtown less than a half dozen miles away. Their start had been delayed, and when they arrived at that little town the afternoon was almost gone and darkness was fast settling over the landscape.

"We stop here to-night," said Thomas.

"Indeed we do," exclaimed Henry. "Drive to the Red Lion, John."

A few minutes later the coach stood in the stable yard of the little inn, servants were unharnessing the horses and leading them into the lantern-lit barn adjoining. Denby, now half conscious, was assisted into the tap room and adjusted to one of the chairs. The boys were warming themselves before the big log fire, talking with the landlord, arranging for an enormous dinner and all in all thoroughly enjoying the warm candle-lit room, such a contrast to the chill November weather outside.

CHAPTER IV

AT THE RED LION

When arrangements for dinner had been completed, and the landlord had promised to set before the hungry boys the best his larder afforded, they were ready to think of dry clothes. The landlord bustled around, provided candles and in a very few moments was ready to lead them to the second floor where the bedrooms were situated. Fires had already been lighted in the rooms, the wood boxes replenished and clean sheets put on all the beds.

"Lead the way, landlord," cried Henry. "We want to be ready when dinner is."

"You can dress more quickly than I can roast a duck, I'll wager," said that cheery, red-faced mountain of a man. "I haven't started the fowls yet so you have plenty of time."

"Where's Denby?"

Sam Pierson was the first to notice that their erstwhile driver was no longer in the chair in which he had been sleeping.

"He's gone," exclaimed Hugh Harris.

"Evidently," said Sam. "I want to know where he is."

"Gone to bed probably," said Henry with a smile. "That's the best place for him, too."

"Denby gone to bed?" laughed the landlord, returning to the room from the stairway he had started to ascend. "Denby hasn't gone to bed at this hour. I know him too well to believe that, but I guess I can find him."

He swung open the door leading to the taproom. Leaning against the bar were some half dozen men, among them one whose face and clothes were covered with mud. He was standing with his back against the bar telling a story, while the others of the group were gathered about him in a half circle listening with amused smiles. As the door opened the story teller glanced around, and seeing the huge figure of the proprietor standing there he pointed a wavering finger at him, and sang in a thick voice:

"Oh, landlord, you're a funny old thing."

He acted as if he would have liked to sing more, but the impromptu verse seemed to have no second line, and he stopped, his finger still pointing. One eye was closed and he seemed to

encounter great difficulty in finding a focus for the one still remaining open.

"Come on, Joe," said the landlord briskly. "We want you."

"Can't," said Denby briefly.

"Come on," repeated the proprietor.

"Can't," Denby insisted. "Telling a story."

"You'd better not wait for him to finish," said one of the group in front of the bar. "He began his tale twenty minutes ago and not one of us understands a thing of what he is driving at."

Denby looked at the speaker reproachfully. "I hadn't really started," he said.

This statement was greeted with a loud laugh.

"None of us can wait for the finish then," exclaimed the man who had first spoken. "If after twenty minutes steady talking he hasn't got started it will probably take him all night if he goes through to the end."

"You make me sick," said Denby thickly. "I was telling 'bout hold-up on the road. Have a drink, ev'one."

He turned and reached for his glass, which was standing on the bar. He moved too quickly, however, for his foot slipped. He clutched

wildly at the edge of the bar, missed it, and sat down violently. Then he burst into tears.

"Poor Denby," muttered Henry. "The place for him certainly is in bed. Let's get him there."

Willing hands assisted him to his feet. He made no offer of resistance, and a few moments later was tucked snugly away in bed, sunk in a heavy, troubled sleep.

"It will do him good," said John. "Now he'll be able to drive to-morrow morning. We got him to bed just in time."

"A curious fellow, Denby," said the landlord. "He has been here often and I like him. The trouble is he likes drink too well for his good." He waddled off down the stairs, the wood creaking and groaning as if in pain at his every step.

"We'll be ready for dinner whenever you are," Henry called down after him.

" 'Twon't be long," laughed the landlord. "Get yourselves warm."

The boys already were removing their wet clothing as speedily as they could peel it off. Dripping coats, breeches and boots were strewn out before the open fires while the boys, stripped to the skin, were rubbing themselves

violently with coarse towels to revive their circulations and get the warmth back into their thoroughly chilled bodies.

"A terrible day," said John Ayres to Thomas Spencer, with whom he was sharing a room.

"Just the kind you predicted when we first talked of this trip I think."

"Worse I believe," said John.

"Oh well, it's part of the game, and I think the weather will be fine to-morrow."

"The roads will not, but they are better this side of Elisabethtown than from here to Newark I think. It would be disagreeable if we should lose our way though, wouldn't it? On my way up we got off the road once and for a time every one was badly worried. Fortunately the woods were not very thick and we were not inconvenienced for long."

"One thing about this experience is that it proves the wisdom of the founders of the college in planting an institution in the middle colonies." Thomas held one end of his towel in each hand and rubbed his back furiously until he was quite out of breath. "Suppose you had been obliged to travel from Philadelphia to New Haven where Yale is situated, or on to

Boston in order to attend Harvard, for instance. Under the most favorable conditions I doubt very much if you could make the trip from Philadelphia to Boston in much under two weeks, and it would probably take ten days to New Haven."

"Quite true," John agreed. "Nor would attendance at William and Mary in Virginia be any easier. The roads through Maryland are said to be atrocious. Mr. Leonard, a visitor at my father's home last summer, had recently come over them and said that in many places it was impossible to average more than two miles an hour."

"That's better than we did to-day, I fancy," said Thomas, throwing down the towel and starting to put on his dry clothes. "Of course this was exceptionally bad weather and we had a drunken driver to boot. All of which doesn't make for speed and is somewhat unusual."

"I grant you the weather was unusual," said John, "but I can't say the same about the driver. That's a rather frequent occurrence I fear."

"The drinking in this country is terrible I'll admit," said Thomas. "I know that rum,

whisky, spirits of all kind, and beer and wines are consumed in all parts in almost incredible quantities. And most of the people seem to care far more for sport and pleasure and spending money than for work and saving. I've heard more than one person say he thought the country was going straight to the dogs."

"I fear it myself," John agreed soberly. "However, it is for those of us who enjoy the benefits of higher education to set an example for the others. I believe that the benefits we receive carry with them responsibilities, that the man who really is educated recognizes this fact, and that all of us should remember always that we are under obligations which cannot be avoided."

"Sounds like a sermon," laughed Thomas.

"But isn't it true?"

"Of course it is. The more one has the greater his responsibilities. That's always the case. You say rightly, too, that it is for the college-trained man to set an example for the others."

"By the way," Thomas exclaimed a moment later, "the house in which the College of New Jersey was born is just across the field there.

When to-morrow morning comes I'll point it out to you."

Some two hundred yards distant from the Red Lion Inn was the Presbyterian Church, and just beyond the church, separated from it by the burying ground, was the parsonage. This was the first home of the college.

"It hardly compares with Nassau Hall," said Thomas. "But you have already seen the new college."

"Yes, indeed," said John. "It is wonderful."

"Who's there?" exclaimed Thomas suddenly, turning towards the door.

There was no answer. Voices could be heard in the neighboring bedrooms, for partitions of the inn were very thin and by no means soundproof. From below floated the sound of conversation in the taproom and the occasional snatch of a song, but no other noise of any kind was heard.

"I thought I heard some one outside the door," said Thomas.

"Let's investigate," said John briefly, and walking over to the door threw it open. He stepped out into the hallway.

"What are you doing?" he demanded.

"Ssh."

Thomas threw his coat around him, took a lighted candle in his hand and followed John. There stood Hugh Harris, a bucket in his hand, and a sheepish look on his face as disclosed by the flickering candlelight. Hugh had drawn a room to himself, Henry Stirling and Samuel Pierson sharing the third one occupied by the coaching party.

"Ssh," repeated Hugh. "Come in here."

He stepped into the room where Thomas and John were quartered, waited for these two boys to follow him, and then shut the door. "What's the matter with you, John?" he demanded. "You'll spoil everything by so much noise."

"What are you planning to do?" John inquired, puzzled.

"This bucket," said Hugh, "is full of water as you can see. My plan is to hang it over the doorway of the room occupied by Sam and Henry in such a manner that when one of them opens the door the bucket will be tipped over and the contents spilled on whoever is beneath."

"Is that a joke?" asked John coldly.

"To any one with a sense of humor it is,"

Hugh returned with asperity, plainly annoyed by the tone of John's voice, and the frank look of disapproval on the countenance of both boys.

"I reckon I have no sense of humor then," said John.

"Nor I," Thomas chimed in. "You forget, Hugh, that both Henry and Sam have been soaking wet all day and have now changed to the only dry clothes they possess. To get them wet now would be unkind and unnecessary."

"Jokes are all right, Hugh," said John, "but really this is scarcely the time for one like that. Don't you think so?"

Hugh's face had turned a dull red. He looked sullenly at the floor and said nothing. His fingers twitched, however, and he shifted first from one foot, then to the other. His two companions looked at him curiously.

"What's the matter, Hugh?" asked Thomas kindly. "Are you mad at us?"

"I've a good mind to douse the bucket on you two," he cried suddenly and so fiercely that John and Thomas involuntarily drew back a step, amazed at this display of temper.

"You think you're better than I am for some reason," Hugh continued. "What right you

have to think so is beyond me, but you seem to think so just the same. I'm getting tired of it, too. Take my word for it, all of you, that I'll get even one of these days."

He flung open the door and threw himself out of the room. As he did so the bucket struck the door jamb and a portion of its contents splashed his right leg, drenching his breeches leg and stocking from the knee down. John nor Thomas had any inclination to laugh, however, but merely stood in silence until he had gone. Then John closed the door and turned to his companion.

"Well?" he said.

Thomas shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know what's the matter with him," he said. "Hugh has always impressed me as an odd chap, but I never looked for an outburst like this. He acted ugly, didn't he?"

"Indeed he did. What's more, I don't think he meant the bucket merely as a joke. I've suspected for some time that he really dislikes Henry Stirling."

"You think so? Does Henry know it?"

"I doubt it. Henry is too decent a fellow to suspect anybody of mean intentions or of dis-

liking him. He's fond of everybody himself, decent to everybody, and I don't believe he ever had a mean thought in his life."

"Ought we to tell him of this, do you think?"

"I wouldn't," said John. "I may be entirely wrong, and there is no use in starting trouble if it can be avoided."

"It's a curious thing," said Thomas meditatively, leaning down to adjust his stock by the aid of a broken bit of mirror and the faint beams of the candle.

At that moment the door across the hall opened and presently Henry and Sam appeared. Almost immediately the landlord's bellowing voice was heard at the bottom of the stairs announcing that dinner was ready.

"He doesn't have to tell me twice," laughed Henry. "Let's go down at once. Where is Hugh?"

Thomas put on his coat and started after the others. "I think he has gone down already," he said.

CHAPTER V

AT BRUNSWICK

The following morning they were on the road again. The rain had ceased, Denby was sober, but the roads were still seas of mud. The sun was scarcely over the rim of the horizon when they started, but the weather promised to be fair, and the spirits of the little party of students were high in spite of the bad condition of the road. That is with one exception.

Sleepy-eyed stable boys had harnessed the horses to the lumbering stage. The landlord had come out to watch his guests depart, and call deep-voiced cheery good-byes to them, and urge them to come again. This they readily promised to do, and it was a pledge they meant to keep, for at that moment the savory odor of bacon was still in their nostrils, the taste of delicious pancakes lingered with them, and the delightful memory of the duckling consumed the previous evening promised to remain for many a day. Their baggage was stowed away in the

coach and they climbed to their places. Denby clucked to his horses and off they started on the second stage of their journey to Nassau Hall.

The Elisabeth River caused them considerable difficulty. As a result of the heavy rains the stream was swollen and the fording not only required caution and skill, but was dangerous as well. Samuel Pierson and Henry Stirling acted as postilions while crossing the stream and rode on the horses' backs. In this way it was possible to guide and direct the nervous animals better than could have been done from the driver's seat, and more than once this arrangement saved the coach from turning over.

Progress was slow, but a brisk wind came up with the sun and helped greatly to dry out the ground, so that as the day wore on more speed was possible. Not great speed, however, for it was growing dark when they reached the east bank of the Raritan River. On the opposite side they could see the twinkling lights of the little settlement of Brunswick.

"Had we better risk the crossing?" inquired Sam Pierson dubiously.

"I'm in favor of it," said John Ayres briskly.

"The Pouch and Horn is a good inn. Better than any on this side of the river."

"What do you think, Denby?" asked Sam.

"Whatever you say," said that individual. He had been very meek all day, and eager to do anything suggested to him. Evidently he felt ashamed of his previous behavior and was eager to make amends.

"Let's try it," said John. "Hail the ferryman, Denby."

The ferry was a large barge propelled by sweeps, and at that moment was made fast to a stake driven into the mud on the river's edge. The ferryman lived in a rough-boarded shanty close by, and in response to Denby's shout appeared in the doorway of his little house wiping his hands on a dirty towel. A bargain was made with him after considerable argument and presently the stage and horses, with Denby and his five passengers, were on the ferry making slow progress across the river. The horses were somewhat alarmed at finding themselves on board a boat, and one of the party was obliged to hold each animal's bridle, to guard against the results of any sudden fright. A half hour was consumed in covering the quarter

mile breadth of the river, but the passage was finally accomplished and a few moments later the coach was standing in the stable yard of the Pouch and Horn.

"To-morrow we reach Prince Town," exclaimed Henry Stirling enthusiastically. "I shall be greatly excited when we arrive at Nassau Hall, and give fair warning that I shall not be responsible for my actions."

The boys were seated in a half circle around the great fireplace in the main room of the inn. The November night was chilly and the warmth thrown out by the blazing logs was most welcome to the tired and travel-worn students. The dancing light of the fire illumined the big room, its hand-hewn timbers, the sturdy chairs and tables, and the rifles, powder horns and trophies of the hunt with which its walls were hung. Everything suggested coziness and comfort.

"The only trouble is," Henry added laughingly, "that when we arrive there it means work and study again. I'm not as fond of work as I might be. I like a good time pretty well."

"But you go to college to study and learn,"

John Ayres exclaimed. "The time for play is during vacation periods."

"You're too serious minded, John," said Henry. "I believe it is possible to play as you go along. It doesn't pay to work too hard."

"Have you ever tried it, Henry?" inquired Thomas Spencer slyly, nudging Samuel Pierson, who was seated next to him on a low wooden bench.

"That's a very personal question, Tom," Henry responded with a laugh. "I don't mind answering it, however. I did work hard for a whole week once and I didn't enjoy it a bit."

"Weren't the results satisfactory?" inquired John.

"Oh, very," replied Henry readily. "I got such satisfactory results that I nearly reached the decision that work was worth while, and it was a great temptation to continue. I resisted only with difficulty."

"Henry, you're incorrigible," exclaimed John, joining in the laugh which greeted this remark. "However, we may reform you yet."

"You may reform me so far as card playing is concerned," Henry conceded. "The trouble with that is that it is very expensive, although

it has not proven so for you recently, has it, Hugh?"

"Where is Hugh?" asked Henry, as there was no reply to his question. "He was here a few minutes ago. I didn't see him leave."

"He went out," said Samuel Pierson.

"There's something the matter with Hugh," exclaimed Henry. "He's been so quiet lately; he scarcely says a word, and he certainly seems out of sorts about something. Why last evening in Elisabethtown I noticed that he had spilled water on himself and mentioned it to him. I spoke civilly enough, but instead of replying in the same manner he just growled at me and flung himself out of the room."

At that moment voices were heard outside and presently the door opened to admit two travelers, clad in riding costumes. They greeted the group around the fire with a shout of joy.

"Why it's Ezra Whitaker and George Dodd," exclaimed Thomas Spencer. He sprang to his feet and hurried forward to welcome the new arrivals. "Have you come all the way from Newark this morning?" he inquired.

"On horseback," said George Dodd. "A

hard ride, too, for twice we lost our way in the woods this side of Elisabethtown, twice we thought travelers we met on the road were highwaymen, and when we finally reached the river here the ferryman refused to carry us across. It was really nothing less than bribery that induced him to change his mind."

"Did he tell you he had ferried us over a short time previous?" asked Henry.

"He did," said George. "That was the first question we asked him, and when we heard that you were here we felt as if we just had to get here, too."

"We can all travel together to Prince Town to-morrow," cried John. "You and Ezra can go along as outriders."

"First of all we are interested in dinner," said Ezra. "We are nearly famished."

He and George Dodd departed in search of the landlord.

"We didn't leave very much food in the house," Henry called after them.

"Oh, we can eat anything," Ezra returned with a laugh. "Don't worry about us."

"No doubt we'll meet others of the college on the road to-morrow," said Thomas. "More

may even arrive here to-night. The landlord told me that Mr. Prime and six students were here this noon and went on after dinner."

"I doubt if any more come here to-night," said Samuel. "The ferryman apparently is not in a mood to carry any one else across the river to-night."

"As a matter of fact, this might well have been the end of our journey if the citizens of Prince Town had not been more enterprising than those of Brunswick," said Thomas. "At one time the trustees of the college had definitely decided to locate the institution here, you know."

"So I've heard," said John. "They didn't live up to the conditions imposed when it came to a final decision, isn't that it?"

"Exactly. The trustees realized that Newark was not the proper place for the college, and voted to locate it either here or at Prince Town. The conditions were that the inhabitants of Brunswick secure a thousand pounds to the college, and provide ten acres of cleared land, besides two hundred acres of wood land not more than three miles distant. Before the people here had a chance to act the inhabitants

of Prince Town made an offer. Mr. Sergeant, our treasurer, journeyed to Prince Town to view the site and after further meetings it was decided to locate there."

"Did the village authorities give the money and the land or was it done by individuals?" asked John.

"Individuals, I believe. Mr. Nathaniel Fitz Randolph deeded the land to the trustees, upon which Nassau Hall and the President's house are erected; that is, the college proper. Other individuals whose names I do not recall joined in donating the balance of the land required and the money."

"Pretty generous of them I should say," said Henry Stirling. "I must say I admire generosity."

"Of course it was generous of them," Thomas agreed. "At the same time all of these gentlemen realized that it was good business. Locating the college at Prince Town is bound to attract people there, more trade will be carried on and the town in general will prosper."

"Well I hope so," said Henry. "I hope the college will prosper, too, and although I have never seen the town of Prince Town, I am glad

we are going to be there rather than at Brunswick."

"It would be most convenient to your home here," said Samuel.

"You're always practical, aren't you, Sam?" laughed Henry. "Yes, it would be convenient with Perth Amboy just down the river a few miles. I have often sailed up with my father. It is an easy trip and does away with the necessity of land travel. I sailed to New York once, too. No one from Perth Amboy ever thinks of going there by land; it takes too long and the ferries across the Hudson River are scarcely safe I've heard."

The boys sat and talked until the fire burned low. Every one of them was sleepy and ready for bed, but lacking the ambition required to urge him from his seat and make a start. Presently Ezra Whitaker and George Dodd returned, and with them Hugh Harris.

"Feel better?" demanded Henry of the horseback riders. "Where have you been, Hugh?"

"We feel much better," said Ezra, "but we're ready for bed."

Hugh made no response to Henry's question.

He sat down on the bench before the fireplace, shoved his hands into his pockets and thrust his feet out straight in the direction of the fire. His head was pulled down into his collar, and he lounged there, an indistinct figure in the semi-darkness. The dull glow from the dying embers disclosed only the vaguest outlines of the little group.

"I'm ready for bed too," exclaimed Henry. He rose to his feet, yawned and stretched his arms high above his head. "Let's get some candles and go up."

He took a step, tripped over Hugh Harris' outstretched feet, fell heavily to the floor and rolled straight into the fireplace.

CHAPTER VI

PRINCE TOWN

A CRY of alarm greeted this unexpected accident to Henry Stirling. With one accord every boy in the group sprang to his assistance, and he was quickly dragged away from the fireplace. Hurry calls were sent for candles, and when the confusion had died down and lights were secured, Henry was laid out on the table, and an examination made of the extent of his injuries. He personally had made no outcry, but now he began to protest against the attention being given him, maintaining stoutly that he was perfectly all right. His right sleeve, however, was covered with ashes and a strong odor of burnt cloth pervaded the room. It was further evident that his right hand had been badly burned, for in trying to protect himself he had very naturally put out his hand, and had thrust it straight into the live coals.

"He fell over your feet, Hugh," exclaimed John Ayres angrily.

"I know that," Hugh returned. "You might think from the tone of your voice that you suspect me of tripping him deliberately."

"Maybe you did, too," muttered Thomas Spencer under his breath.

The following morning the journey to Prince Town was resumed. The weather was fine, one of those golden November days common to New Jersey. The trees were a bouquet of red and yellow and brown, the sunlight was warm, and the sky cloudless save for two or three patches of white fleece drifting lazily across the blue dome of the heavens; altogether a day to make one glad of life, and youth, and health. The party of students on their way to the new site of their college appreciated the fine weather fully, and were in the best of spirits. They sang, laughed, played jokes on one another and on Denby, and behaved generally as healthy young animals usually do. Ezra Whitaker and George Dodd rode beside the coach, or galloped on ahead and gathered apples from the orchards which lined the roadsides and tossed them up to their comrades on the coach. Everywhere the farmers welcomed them, inviting

them to take as much of the delicious fruit as they wished, for the trees were groaning under its weight, and the ground beneath was covered with it. It was a smiling land through which they passed, prosperous farms, cultivated fields, and woods mottled with the warm autumn sunshine.

Once Ezra and George, who had ridden far ahead, suddenly dashed out in front of the coach, their faces covered with handkerchiefs, and pretended to be highwaymen. They called upon the coach to halt, and its passengers to throw up their hands. Their voices were disguised and their coats turned inside out, but the riders on the stage recognized the horses, and pelted the false robbers so vigorously with apples that they were soon driven off.

A stop for dinner was made at noontime, and early in the afternoon they came within sight of Prince Town. They dashed across the Millstone River at the little village of Kingston, turned to the left, and the hill on which Prince Town is situated came into view. John Ayres pointed it out, for he had passed over the Kings Highway on his journey from Philadelphia to Newark a few weeks previously, and the site of

Prince Town had been indelibly stamped in his memory. It was greeted with a shout which made the occupants of a nearby farmhouse rush to the door in alarm. Braddock's defeat the previous year was the subject of constant and nervous discussion all through the Colonies, and the settlers never felt absolutely secure from Indian attacks no matter in how thickly populated a section they dwelt. But in this case the farmer and his family quickly recognized the boys as students on the way to Nassau Hall, and greeted them with cheery shouts of welcome.

Denby whipped up his horses, and the old coach rocked and swayed, tossed first to one side and then to the other by the deep ruts and holes with which the road was lined and dotted. Even Henry Stirling forgot the pain in his right hand for the time being, and joined in the celebration of his fellows.

He had mentioned his hurt only when asked about it. Throughout the whole day he had had a smile for everybody and everything, and only a close observer could have detected a drawn look about his eyes which showed he was in pain. Hugh Harris had been more lively and

cheerful than at any time since the journey had commenced; particularly he was solicitous of Henry and kept inquiring constantly about the injured hand and whether he could do anything to alleviate the pain. John Ayres and Thomas Spencer, who had talked the matter over and had a strong suspicion that the accident at the Pouch and Horn had not been entirely unintentional, were nonplussed by this change in the manner of the boy they suspected. As the hours went by they felt their suspicions disappearing, and really began to feel chagrined that they had ever had any at all.

"Hugh must have been sick," said Thomas. "No doubt that is what made him surly."

"Wouldn't he have mentioned it?" asked John, a trifle dubiously.

"Hugh is an odd fellow, you know," said Thomas. "He keeps lots of things to himself. All poets are somewhat queer, I suppose."

They laughed, and put the whole thing out of their minds. They were arriving at Prince Town, at Nassau Hall, and that was all that mattered. They swept up the road past Castle Howard and the Greenland farm, and a few minutes later found themselves in the little

village, of Prince Town. Shady trees lined the broad street which led through the village, the Kings Highway, formerly the main Indian trail between the Hudson and the Delaware Rivers, over which the great chiefs were wont to lead their braves on their expeditions, peaceful and warlike.

"There is Nassau Hall," cried John Ayres suddenly.

On the left, its roof showing through the tree tops, they spied the new home of the College of New Jersey. It faced The Broad Street, and from its front entrance a path led down to the main thoroughfare. There was a projection in front extending three or four feet, a cupola surmounted the middle of the roof, it was three stories high, and built of stone.

"Look at it," exclaimed John enthusiastically. "Look at it, and feel proud that you are privileged to live and study in such a place; the largest stone edifice in the British Colonies of North America. Stop the coach, Denby."

The boys stood on top of the coach and admired the beautiful building, while George Dodd and Ezra Whitaker sat on their horses close by. The discussion of the building was punctuated

by long silences while the boys merely gazed at Nassau Hall so impressed by its imposing appearance that they had nothing at all to say.

Presently a robust-looking young man emerged from the front entrance and hurried down the path towards the coach.

"Here comes Mr. Baldridge," exclaimed Henry. "No doubt he will direct us to our rooms. I wish I could see my old landlady, Mrs. Caxton, now. I'd like to show her my new abode and add a few more remarks to those I made to her when I left Newark."

Simeon Baldridge was the steward of the college. He was a young man, having only graduated from the College of New Jersey in 1755, but his present position was an important one. His duty it was to supply food for the college, to collect the price of the food from the students who ate it, to collect tuition fees and room rent, pay the tutors their salaries, buy all the furniture and equipment, hire the servants and send out the notices for trustees' meetings. Through him the students bought their books. Now that the college had removed to Prince Town one of his most arduous duties was to be the guarding of the bell rope from

mischievous students, though on this particular day he was happily unaware of this future difficulty. In fact if he had had even an inkling of the many and varied troubles which lay ahead of him it is questionable whether he would not have resigned his position then and there.

"Welcome, gentlemen," said Mr. Baldridge, and the boys all tipped their hats. "If you are ready I shall be happy to guide you to your rooms."

"Ready and eager, sir," exclaimed Thomas Spencer.

The five boys who had made the journey by stage climbed down into the dusty street with their luggage. Denby started for the inn to put up his horses and rest them preparatory to starting on the return journey to Newark the day following. George Dodd and Ezra Whitaker went behind him to leave their horses and arrange for their care.

"Regular college exercises will commence again to-morrow morning," said Mr. Baldridge as they walked towards the building. "You have arrived in good time, but the last to get here I believe."

"Prayers to-morrow morning?" asked Henry with a sigh.

"And evening too," Mr. Baldridge replied briskly. "Absence means a fine of two-pence, tardiness one penny."

"I know, I know," said Henry. "You don't have to tell me the rules. I suppose the president is sitting over there in his new house at this very minute trying to think up some more to add to the thousand or so we've got already."

"You are disrespectful," said Mr. Baldridge tartly. "We have not got a thousand rules as you know full well, and you should not speak so of a man who is sick, sick as a result of working too hard in the interests of the college."

"I meant no disrespect," said Henry. "I admire President Burr greatly, but all the rules which obtain here I find very irksome at times."

"One of my duties is to enforce them," responded Mr. Baldridge with asperity. He felt the importance of his office keenly.

"I appreciate that," said Henry with a smile. "I hope our dealings will be on matters other than that of discipline."

"Complaining about the food, maybe," said Sam Pierson slyly. Mr. Simeon Baldridge was

about to comment forcibly on this remark, but they arrived at the entrance of Nassau Hall at that moment. A group of students, inside, catching sight of Baldridge immediately began to ply him with questions, all talking at once. The greatest confusion naturally resulted, and in desperation the distracted steward finally placed his hands over his ears, leaned back against the wall, and shut his eyes.

"Don't throw that," cried a voice sharply.

Immediately Mr. Baldridge thrust his right arm in front of his face as a guard. Then he opened one eye half way, and peered cautiously at the half circle of faces grouped around him. A burst of laughter greeted this performance, for the harassed steward had plainly expected to be the object of physical attack. He had been frightened momentarily. Now he was angry.

"Stop laughing!" he shouted, his face purple with rage.

Silence reigned in the entrance hall immediately. Many a student was keeping quiet with the greatest difficulty, however, and only the most concentrated attention prevented more than one from breaking out again into loud

laughter. Mr. Baldridge glared at the group of boys angrily, turning his head slowly from side to side, peering intently at each student in turn. His face gradually turned from purple to white, his teeth were set tight, and his lips drawn and narrowed.

"No more of this nonsense," he said finally, between clenched teeth. "I'm going to have order and respect here, and I want that understood now. Now!" he repeated savagely.

He left his station against the wall and the line of students separated to allow him to walk out into the main hallway. There they fell in behind him. Some one "meowed" like a cat and Mr. Baldridge spun around on the sole of his right foot, and once again he glared at the group of boys. Not a word was spoken, not a face showed the slightest evidence of guilt, and after a moment of tense silence he turned and proceeded on his way.

"We'll have some fun with him yet," said Henry in a low voice to John.

Henry Stirling and John Ayres were to share the same room. Directly across the hall and opposite their door Thomas Spencer and Samuel Pierson were to live. Hugh Harris

roomed next to them, alone, while Ezra Whitaker and George Dodd were established a little farther down the hall.

Mr. Baldridge came into the room with Henry and John.

"Some of these young men seem to think they can play fast and loose with me," he said, his eyes snapping. "I'll show them soon enough that I'm in charge."

"Quite right, Mr. Baldridge," Henry assented, though he found it possible to nudge John in the back as he said it. "I wouldn't put up with discourtesy of any kind if I were in your place."

"I do not intend to," the steward exclaimed decidedly. "I would appreciate it if you would give that message to whomsoever you see."

"Delighted," said Henry. "Aren't these nice rooms?"

"Too good for students, I say," said Baldridge peevishly.

"How many are there all together?" asked John.

"Sixty rooms in the building," said Mr. Baldridge, who had a quick, nervous manner of speech. "Forty-nine of them for students

and figuring three to a room that gives us accommodations for one hundred and forty-seven in all. You see we can double the size of the college. The other rooms are the library, dining room, refectory, and recitation rooms."

"Quite a large building," said Henry. "You must feel proud to be in charge of it."

Mr. Baldridge gave Henry a sharp glance. Possibly he suspected from the tone of his voice that there might be a question in the mind of at least one student whether he was in control of its inmates, even if he was in charge of the building itself.

CHAPTER VII

A POEM

Henry Stirling was of a restless disposition. Studying was something which he said did not agree with him, and he often told his roommate, John Ayres, that he felt he should always be extremely careful not to do too much of it.

"It's bad for a young man," he exclaimed. "Sitting still and studying for such long stretches makes one nervous. I have to get up and walk around every few minutes."

"But we have plenty of time for exercise," said John, glancing up from the copy of Gordon's "Geographical Grammar" lying open on the desk before him. It was evening, a short time after evening prayers.

"Not so much," said Henry. "Just think of it, we have to be in our rooms all the time except for a half-hour after morning prayers, an hour and a half after dinner, and from evening prayers till nine o'clock. This having to

go to bed at nine o'clock every night is also extremely irksome to me."

His roommate laughed. "But you never want to get up in the morning," he said.

"I'd be that way no matter what time I went to bed," said Henry. "One of these nights I think I'll just do something to the bell so it won't ring when nine o'clock comes. Also, I have a scheme for getting out at night."

John swung around on his chair. "Look here, Henry," he exclaimed earnestly, "you be careful. We've only been at Prince Town a month and already you've broken nearly every rule we have. You'll be called before the trustees if you're not careful, and you might even be suspended. What do your fines amount to so far?"

"Oh, about thirteen shillings," said Henry lightly. "I don't mind them so much, and the college needs the money. Besides, I won thirty shillings the other evening from two of the soldiers quartered in the town."

"There's another thing," said John. "If the college authorities find that you have been associating with that sort of people you'll get in trouble as sure as you're a foot high. You

should take your studies here more seriously, Henry."

"Don't you worry about me all the time," said Henry with a laugh. "I think I can take care of myself without difficulty, and it distresses me to have you so anxious when I do one of my silly things. I appreciate your interest, John, you know that." He put his hand impulsively on his roommate's shoulder.

"But, Henry,—"

Before John could finish what he had started to say there came a soft knock at the door. Henry turned and opened it. Thomas Spencer immediately entered, shut the door behind him, locked it, and stepped over to the desk where John was seated. His manner was mysterious and his two friends watched him curiously.

Thomas, chuckling to himself, drew a piece of paper from his breast pocket, unfolded it carefully, and held it so that the candlelight shone upon the words written across it. "Are you busy?" he inquired.

"Of course not," said Henry. "What have you got?"

"Ssh," whispered Thomas. "Not a word."

"I only asked you a question," said Henry. "What have you got?"

"Promise never to tell?"

"I'm going right over to President Burr's now, and tell him I saw you going into a tavern the other day if you don't hurry with what you've got there," said Henry, pretending to be very serious.

"You did not see me going into a tavern," exclaimed Thomas, looking at Henry in alarm.

"I know it," said Henry glibly. "But you're so slow. I am consumed with curiosity to learn what is on that slip of paper."

"A poem."

"One of your own?" inquired John.

"That's unlikely," said Thomas, with a smile. "Did you ever hear of my writing poetry? No, this is some one else's handiwork."

"Whose?"

"There is no name signed; only initials."

"My, but you are exasperating," exclaimed Henry. "Why do you insist upon all this mystery?"

"No mystery, I assure you," said Thomas.

"All right then, tell us where you got this

poem, why it amuses you so much, and what the initials are."

"Sam Pierson found it lying on the floor in the gallery," said Thomas. "Evidently it had been dropped there by mistake. Naturally he picked it up to see what it was, and then he brought it to our room and showed it to me. I felt that I must share it with you too."

"Do you know who wrote it?" John asked.

"We suspect," said Thomas dryly.

"What are the initials?"

"Let me read you the poem first, and then perhaps you can guess."

"I don't care what you do so long as you do something," cried Henry, pacing up and down the room. "I shall throw something at you in a minute."

"Promise never to tell?" Thomas insisted.

"Yes," exclaimed Henry. "I'll promise anything."

"And I," said John.

"Listen then," Thomas directed. He placed the candle on top of the dresser, held the slip of paper in his left hand, stood up straight, with his chest extended, and prepared to read.

Then he rolled his eyes upward, threw a kiss to some spot on the ceiling, and sighed.

The two boys watched him with keen amusement.

"The title of this poem is 'Hope,' " Thomas announced.

"Go on," said Henry, and with a sweeping gesture Thomas began:

"My love is fair, her voice is sweet,
Her hands are white, her tiny feet
Two twinkling carriers of joy
That bear her up the village street.
Her eyes are dark as some deep lake,
Her lips two scarlet strips that make
A young man mad in love with her
Do desp'rate things for her dear sake.
The hawthorn bloom is not more fair
Than is her cheek; her silken hair
Is raven black and smooth and long
And darker than the darkest night.
She is all things a maid should be;
If she would share her life with me,—
But, ah, my aim is fixed so high
That such a hope seems bold of me.
And yet I hope."

At the conclusion of the reading Henry uttered a whoop of joy and clapped Thomas joy-

ously on the shoulder. "A marvelous poem," he cried. "Who can the lady be?" Then he threw himself into a chair convulsed with laughter. John was similarly affected.

"Isn't the sentiment beautiful?" asked Thomas in mock seriousness.

"Absolutely wonderful," said Henry. "I think the line I like best is 'Do desp'rate things for her dear sake.' It is so noble and brave."

"A remarkable poem in every way," said John. "The lady must be charming indeed who can inspire such ardent sentiments."

"I think I know her," said Thomas. "You know her too."

"Absolutely wonderful," said Henry. "I know any one whose feet are 'twinkling carriers of joy,' or whose 'eyes are dark as some dark lake?' The possessor of these charms must be as remarkable as the verse itself. What are the initials of the author?"

"H. H."

"Hugh Harris, of course," John exclaimed. "We might have guessed."

"Do you really think it is Hugh?" said Henry.

"No question about it in my mind," said Thomas. "Certainly these are his initials and you know he is a poet."

"I knew he wrote verse, of course," laughed Henry, "but I never realized before that he is a poet. You see I consider that there is a distinction."

"It is a cause for pride that we have so gifted a person living among us here," said Thomas. "I think he should be suitably honored."

"How?" Henry leaned forward in his chair and began to run his fingers through his hair, a mannerism of his when especially interested in anything or excited. "Of course we can't make use of this particular poem."

"Why not?" Thomas demanded, turning away from the window at the speaker.

"It doesn't belong to us," said Henry. "As a matter of fact I feel sort of guilty at having read it. It's almost like reading some one else's private correspondence, and a gentleman doesn't do that."

"But Sam found it lying on the floor," said Thomas. "It was not sealed or signed and I think we were justified in reading it."

"Oh, I do too," said Henry. "The trouble

is that now we know the author and we can't take advantage of him. This may be a very serious matter for Hugh, and it would not be fair to expose him. The poem should be returned to him and nothing said about it to anybody."

"Henry is right," said John. "That is the gentlemanly thing to do. Sam found it and he should be the one to give it back."

"I suppose so," said Thomas. "It seems too bad to have to forego such a fine opportunity for fun at Hugh's expense though. He takes himself so seriously, and is so solemn that it would do him good if a little good-natured fun could be had with him."

"I agree with all of that," said Henry. "Still Hugh is a good fellow at heart and this would be extremely embarrassing to him. At the same time I have to confess that I am glad of having had the opportunity to hear this wonderful expression of a young man's love. 'Do desp'rate deeds for her dear sake.' " He burst out laughing again.

"Might we inquire the lady's identity?" asked John.

"Don't you know?" exclaimed Thomas in

surprise. "I thought every one knew the object of Hugh's tender affections."

"There are so many of them," laughed John. "It is difficult to keep count."

"True enough," said Thomas. "But you know the Reverend Isaac Smith, our worthy tutor, I presume."

"Is it his daughter?" demanded Henry. "She is charming, I'll admit. Only last week I had the honor of taking tea with her at her father's home."

"Yes," said Thomas, "and I understand from Ezra Whitaker that she considers you a very attractive young gentleman."

Henry blushed and laughed. "It is kind of her to say so," he said, "but young ladies really have small place in my life. I had much rather pass my time in the company of men."

"I agree with that," John exclaimed warmly, "and certainly no one can accuse Henry of being a ladies' man."

"I know it," said Thomas. "Ezra said, however, that when Miss Smith made the remark Hugh was present and seemed considerably worried. While walking back to Nassau Hall he mentioned the matter and tried to sound

Ezra out about Henry's feelings towards the young lady. Evidently he considers you a rival."

"Very complimentary of him," laughed Henry, "but he can put his mind at ease. I am no one's rival in affairs of the heart."

"Well, it's a grand poem anyway," said Thomas. "I'm sorry we can't do anything with it, but your view of the matter is the correct one of course." He rose. "I must be going back to my room now and will ask Sam to return it, and not to mention having seen it."

"Just a moment before you go, Thomas," said Henry. "Would you mind helping me with the translation of one short passage from Tully's Orations? It is part of the assignment for to-morrow and has been giving me no end of trouble."

"Delighted," said Thomas.

At that moment the bell in the tower of Nassau Hall started to toll the hour of nine.

"Better wait till morning," said John. "Old 'By' Prime will be knocking at the door in a moment to see if we are in bed. If he discovers Thomas in here it may make trouble. He is getting exceedingly strict lately."

"Quite right," Henry agreed. "I'll stop in your room the first thing in the morning, Thomas. Hurry along, I think I hear him coming down the gallery."

"I'll expect you the first thing in the morning then," said Thomas. "Good-night."

He opened the door into the hall quietly and slipped out. John blew out the candle and they sat in silence on the edge of the bed waiting until Mr. Prime should rap at their door and pass on. Across the hall they heard the click of the lock as Thomas entered his room, then coming nearer and nearer the soft knocks on the doors along the hall as the tutor went his rounds and made sure that the students had complied with the rule about being in bed by nine o'clock. The deep-toned bell rang for the customary five minutes and then was still. The moonlight shone in through the small-paned window, and its pale beams outlined a faint patch of yellow on the bare floor. Against the winter sky the tree tops without waved their bare branches, ghostly arms that seemed to be reaching up to pluck the glittering stars from the bosom of the heavens.

"Take your feet off the floor, John," whis-

pered Henry. "Otherwise we're on the bed, not in it."

There came a knock at the door.

"In bed, sir," said Henry.

"Don't forget to be on time for prayers tomorrow morning, Mr. Stirling," said the well-known voice of Mr. Benjamin Y. Prime.

"No, sir," said Henry, and poked John in the ribs as he said it, causing that young man to utter a loud grunt.

"What was that?" demanded the tutor.

"I said I will surely be on time," said Henry.

The tutor passed on and the two boys began to disrobe and prepare for bed. They did not run the risk of making a light, and adopted the further precaution of removing their shoes so that they might move about the room without making a noise.

"That poke you gave me was nearly disastrous," said John.

"I know it," chuckled Henry. "I didn't mean to be so violent. Old Prime thought one of us had said something to him, didn't he?"

"He's suspicious always. I hope Thomas got back to his room safely."

"Oh, he did I'm sure. Prime was down the

hall around the corner when Thomas left here."

"Sam can't return the poem to Hugh tonight."

"No, it's too late now. Maybe he'll put it under his pillow and dream sweet dreams." Both boys laughed softly.

They tiptoed carefully about the room, hurrying as fast as they could, for it was a hard and fast rule that the last one ready for bed had to raise the window. On cold winter nights this was not always a pleasant duty, and the privilege of crawling in between the blankets before the cold blasts from without entered the room was one to be prized. Moreover, if the window had to be opened after the nine o'clock curfew bell had rung it was a particularly unpleasant task, for it had to be done silently lest the creaking of the sash inform one of the ever-watchful tutors that some one had not gone to bed on time and prompt an investigation. Raising the window silently required care and considerable time, and accordingly meant a thorough chilling on cold nights.

John was the first one in bed this night, as usual. Only rarely did his roommate succeed

in transferring the duty of window raising to him. On this particular occasion, however, he minded the task not the least bit. The poem by Hugh Harris had amused him greatly and put him in excellent spirits, so that nothing bothered him.

He got the window up without mishap, jumped gayly into bed and lay there chuckling.

"What are you so pleased about?" demanded John.

"I was thinking of the poem."

"You better stop thinking and go to sleep. You know what Mr. Prime said about being on time for prayers in the morning."

Henry ignored this admonition and continued to laugh softly to himself. "Isn't it wonderful?" he said.

John grunted sleepily.

"'Do desp'rate deeds for her dear sake,'" Henry quoted, and shook with silent laughter. "Isn't that a wonderful line, John?"

John made no answer. His deep and even breathing proclaimed the fact that already he was in the land of dreams.

CHAPTER VIII

TROUBLE BREWING

When John opened his eyes the following morning he found that Henry was already awake, a most unusual occurrence. Most mornings it was necessary for him to pull the bedclothes entirely off the bed before his roommate could be persuaded to get up. This day, however, Henry was wide awake, and in high spirits.

"Still thinking about Hugh's poetry, I suppose," said John.

"I am."

"Well you better think more about Tully's Orations and get Thomas to translate that passage for you before it is too late."

"Right you are, John. In fact you're always right." He sprang out of bed, scampered over to the window, closed it and began to dress, whistling gayly all the while. Footsteps and voices could be heard in the halls now, for the occupants of Nassau Hall were early risers, and

were already astir. Another day was commencing at the College of New Jersey.

In a few moments Henry was fully dressed and had gone across the hall to seek Thomas's aid with the Latin translation which had caused him so much trouble. He found Thomas and Samuel Pierson, his roommate, partially dressed, and apparently in a desperate state mentally. They were down on the floor on their hands and knees, one peering under the bed the other looking under the washstand. Henry stopped short in the doorway and looked at them in amazement.

"What's the matter?" he demanded.

Thomas looked up. "Come in and shut the door," he directed.

"What's the matter?" Henry repeated.

Thomas looked at the door to be certain it was fastened. "We've lost the poem," he said in a dismal tone.

"Lost the poem?" echoed Henry. "Where?"

"If we knew that we'd know where to look for it," muttered Sam, now on his feet examining the contents of the bureau drawers.

"But I don't see how you could lose it," Henry exclaimed. "You most assuredly had

it in your hand when you left our room last night."

"I know it, and I thought I had put it in my pocket as I came across the hall. I heard Mr. Prime coming and I was in a desperate hurry. The only thing I can think of is that in the rush I didn't get it safely into my pocket and it must have fallen to the floor of the hallway."

"Have you looked for it there?"

"We have just come in. We had to get our lights out last night before Mr. Prime came along, and it never occurred to me that the poem was not in my pocket. But when I looked for it this morning it was gone. We have searched high and low without success."

"You must have dropped it in the hall," said Henry. "Some one has picked it up."

"That's what I think," said Thomas. "If it were in the room here we could find it. I'm distressed about the whole circumstance."

"Maybe Mr. Prime found it," Samuel suggested.

"I hope he did," said Thomas. "It would probably mean nothing to him, and very likely he would throw it away. If one of the students found it though he might not be so accom-

modating. It is not probable either that he would be as considerate of Hugh's feelings as we are. Suppose he should recognize Hugh as the author and expose him; I would feel as if it were my fault."

"No reason for feeling that way," said Henry. "I'll grant you it's unfortunate, but you are not to blame. Hugh lost it himself to begin with, and it is bad luck for him if he has an unfortunate experience as a result of his carelessness. But the fault most certainly is not yours."

"You are very cheering, Henry," said Thomas. "I hope that whoever finds it will recognize that it is a personal thing and will return it if he knows the author, or destroy it if he does not."

"I can't think there is any one here who would disclose the author if he knew him," said Samuel. "None of us would."

"Forget about it, Thomas," Henry advised. "The important thing at the present moment is Tully's Orations. Latin not silly poetry is what we are interested in."

Thomas took the book from Henry. He was a skilled Latin student, having commenced his

study of the language at an early age under the tutelage of his father, a minister widely known for his knowledge of the Classics. He read the troublesome passage for Henry with only the slightest hesitation. It was fortunate for Henry, too, that his friend did translate Latin so easily, for he had scarcely finished when the bell started to ring, summoning the students to morning prayers.

The boys hurried downstairs to the room used for the purpose of worship and took their places with their classmates. President Aaron Burr was in his accustomed place on the platform and conducted the service, which was opened with a prayer. A reading from the Scriptures followed, the story of Joseph and his brothers during the great famine in Egypt. This story always appealed strongly to Henry and he had the greatest admiration for the character of Joseph, whose conduct at that time proved him, in the young man's estimation, the most perfect type of gentleman. The service concluded with the singing of a hymn.

Breakfast was the next thing on the day's calendar. The students assembled in the refectory, and sat by classes, at least the Seniors

and Juniors were placed at the large head table, the Sophomores and Freshmen at the lower table. Thin gruel was served, followed by semi-stale black bread and thick, dirty-looking coffee. As usual these unappetizing articles of food were greeted by the students with exclamations of indignation.

"Food for savages and swine," cried Ezra Whitaker angrily. "How any one can expect self-respecting students to stomach such vile stuff is beyond my comprehension."

"Why don't you tell Mr. Baldridge about it?" asked Henry. "He is the steward."

"I did tell him, only yesterday."

"With no good result," said Henry with a laugh.

"Look at it," cried Ezra. "Just look at this liquid he calls by the name of coffee. Made out of oak leaves and mud is my guess. The bread is sour and the main ingredient of the gruel is some substance inferior to sand."

"I wish you were the steward, Ezra," said Hugh Harris, winking at Henry, who was seated opposite him at the table. "You'd furnish us with food that is fit to eat, I'm sure."

"Perhaps we can get him appointed,"

laughed John. "I hesitate to complain to Mr. Baldridge, but I assure you I'd have no such hesitancy if Ezra were the person responsible."

Ezra, however, was in no mood for levity. He muttered imprecations under his breath and was not to be lured into smiling by the banter of his friends. "It's disgraceful," he exclaimed. "I don't see how any one can consider it in the light of a joke. Even such a stupid lot as you all are," he added.

A loud laugh greeted this outburst, and naturally did not tend to soothe Ezra's ruffled feelings. He lapsed into silence, sat quietly at the table for a few moments without speaking, and then pulled his geographical history out of his pocket and began to study. The others, seeing that he was really angry, left him alone, and general conversation lagged perceptibly.

This quiet was short-lived. George Dodd, who was sitting alongside Henry, suddenly uttered an exclamation and sprang to his feet. From his pocket he drew a piece of paper, and with a sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach, Henry recognized it as the one Thomas had dropped in the hall the previous evening. George was planning to read the poem before

"Gentlemen," George announced, "I have a rare treat in store for you"

the whole table, that was evident. What could he do to prevent him? He half rose from his seat and made as if to snatch the paper from George's hand. Then the thought flashed through his mind that it might look as if he knew too much about the poem; he hesitated and sat down again. By that time it was too late.

"Gentlemen," George announced, "I have a rare treat in store for you."

The eyes of every one at the table were on the speaker now. Plainly any opportunity for stopping him had passed. Henry sank low into his chair, and blushed to the roots of his hair as he thought of how Hugh would feel. He glanced at Thomas and saw distress deeply marked on his countenance; John was wriggling uncomfortably on his chair, while Samuel Pierson was trying to eat unconcernedly and give the appearance of not being interested. Henry looked at Hugh, and saw him start suddenly, as he recognized what it was that George held; then his face grew pale, and he gripped the edge of the table until his fingernails showed red and white. Henry's heart bled for him.

"Hear, hear," cried somebody.

"A poet is in our midst," said George. "I

may even say a great poet; not of the epic variety of Homer and Virgil perhaps, but a poet who writes verse fairly oozing with love, whose lofty and tender sentiments have, I do not hesitate to say, never been surpassed since verse has been employed for the expression of human emotions."

"Hear, hear," shouted the students gleefully.

"Who is this great poet?" somebody inquired.

"Read the poem," cried another.

George held up his hand for silence. "You are impatient," he said. "It is commendable in you to show such an interest in the discovery of so brilliant a luminary. It shows you have a place in your hearts for the great things of this world. But I tell you you have not the slightest inkling of the treat in store. Only the words of another poet, one equally gifted, could do it justice, and I state with confidence that there is no such paragon alive."

"Hear, hear," shouted the students again, as George paused for a moment. They were sitting forward on their chairs expectantly, enjoying the proceedings with the keenest relish.

Henry looked at Hugh again. The unfortu-

nate author of the poem had turned a sickly green and sunk back into his seat a picture of utter despair and despondency. His mouth was twisted into what evidently was intended for a smile, but he was a poor actor, and if he was endeavoring to appear unconscious and unconcerned he would not have succeeded in deceiving any one who took the trouble to look at him closely. Henry felt sorrier for him than he had ever felt for any one in all his life. And yet he was fascinated by the look on Hugh's face.

It is said that if you stare at a person hard enough and concentrate all of your attention on him you can make him look at you. This was not what Henry was trying to accomplish, but presently Hugh took his eyes off George and looked straight at Henry. It was unexpected and disconcerting, and took Henry by surprise. He flushed a deep crimson as their eyes met.

Immediately a change came over Hugh. He glanced at George and then back at Henry, and the look on his face altered. Color came back to his cheeks, his eyes took on a steely glint, and he sat up on his chair and leaned forward the way the other students were doing. Henry was

embarrassed and uncomfortable, ill at ease and self-conscious. He heard George reading the poem and his voice sounded miles away, and somehow seemed unreal.

"My love is fair, my love is sweet."

he heard, as if in a dream. He looked at the faces around the table, glanced at George, who was proceeding gayly with the reading of the poem. Then he stole another look at Hugh. As he did so he caught the young "poet" just turning his eyes away from him, and he felt more uncomfortable than ever. Why he should feel that way he did not understand, and it made him angry. Then he heard George read the line,

"Do desp'rate things for her dear sake,"

and in spite of himself he laughed. The memory of that line was too much for him. He hated himself for having given way to merriment at what he considered such a really tragic time, but he positively could not help it. Then he saw Hugh looking at him again, and as Hugh saw the amusement on his face he turned a dull

red, his mouth gathered hard lines about it, and his fingers resting on the table twitched nervously.

"He thinks I'm responsible," muttered Henry to himself.

He glanced around the table, which was now in an uproar. Cheers and shrieks of delight greeted the end of the poem, the students clapped, stamped their feet on the floor and whistled. True, this celebration did not last long, for the tutors soon called for quiet, and though the noise was slow in subsiding, comparative order was restored eventually. The meal ended, the students trooped out of the refectory and went to their rooms. With few exceptions they were in high spirits, and enjoying to the full the poem which George Dodd had read to them. The exceptions, of course, were the author, and the boys who knew he was the author.

"Wasn't it awful?" whispered John to Henry as they filed out.

"Tragic," said Henry shortly. He was in no mood to discuss the matter. He felt so sorry for Hugh, and then the thought that he was suspected of having put George up to reading the

poem before the assembled student body was perhaps still more distressing. He looked around to see if Hugh were near. He wanted to explain everything to him, tell him how badly he felt, and assure him of his deep sympathy. But Hugh was not to be seen.

Henry and John went up to their room, and were joined a moment later by Thomas Spencer and Samuel Pierson. It was their half-hour rest period.

"Well," said Thomas.

He threw himself into a chair and, resting his elbows on his knees, placed his head in his hands and stared at the floor.

"Poor Hugh," said John.

"Yes," exclaimed Thomas, "and it is all my fault. I had no business bringing the poem over to this room last evening. If I had returned it to its owner, as I should have done, this would never have happened."

"That was for me to do," said Samuel. "It was I who found it originally and who should have returned it to Hugh. I am the one who is to blame."

"There is no use in talking this way, either of you," said John. "The whole affair is very

distressing, of course, but you are not to blame. It is George Dodd, who has played a mean trick on Hugh."

"Do you think he knew Hugh was the author?" asked Thomas.

"I can't say. He must have known that the verses were written by some one of the students here though, and he had no right to read them publicly, and especially to make such a joke out of the performance. It was cruel and he ought to have known better."

"I agree with that," said Samuel earnestly. "None of us here would have done such a thing, I am sure."

"What do you think about it, Henry?" John inquired. "You're sitting over there in the corner as glum as an old owl."

Henry looked up. "I scarcely know what to think," he said. "I feel terribly sorry for Hugh, for it is bound to leak out sooner or later that he is the author. I am also sorry because he thinks I put George Dodd up to reading them."

His three companions looked at him in amazement. "What do you mean?" they demanded almost with one voice.

"Just what I say," said Henry with a wistful smile. "He blames me, that's all."

"Explain yourself," cried John. "Surely you must be mistaken."

Henry told of the look he had seen on Hugh's face at breakfast, of the way he had acted, of his own inexplicable embarrassment, and his firm conviction that he was the one Hugh suspected. His companions said nothing for a moment.

"It doesn't seem credible," said Thomas finally. "Certainly no one who knows you would suspect you of so mean a trick."

"Hugh is peculiar though," said John, after a short silence, "and he seems to have a dislike for Henry for some reason. Maybe he really does think you're a rival for Miss Smith's affections."

"That's it, of course," exclaimed Samuel. "That probably explains why he has seemed to go out of his way to be disagreeable to Henry all along. It might also have something to do with Henry's fall into the fireplace at the Pouch and Horn last autumn." He sprang to his feet.

"No," said Henry earnestly. "I don't believe that and you mustn't either. Hugh has

acted queerly towards me I'll admit, but if it is anything more than imagination it surely can't be due to my being a rival of his. That is sheer nonsense."

"Why not go and tell him so?" said John. "Clear things up right away."

"Exactly what I had in mind doing," said Henry. "I'll go at once."

He started for the door, but before he could reach it it was thrown open and Hugh Harris entered. He was white-lipped and pale and his eyes glittered with an unnatural light. He swept the four boys already in the room with a swift glance, and then his gaze rested on Henry. He advanced a step towards him, then stopped short, breathing hard.

CHAPTER IX

AN ACCUSATION

There was a tense silence in the room. All eyes were upon Hugh, who stood with his head held high, hands tightly clenched by his side, pale, thin-lipped, his chest heaving with suppressed emotion. The four other boys in the room looked at him fascinated, spell-bound almost, unable apparently to do anything or say anything. They knew why he was there. They knew the false suspicions rankling in his mind, and they wanted to tell him the truth, to explain to him the whole unfortunate matter, but their tongues seemed tied to the roofs of their mouths. Their throats were parched, their power of speech gone glimmering.

Hugh himself, now that he was face to face with the one he suspected of being the cause of his mortification, seemed to have lost the power to say what he had come there to say. He swallowed hard, his mouth opened, but no words issued forth. The silence continued tense and unbroken.

Henry, a picture of abject misery, stood with his back to the window, his hands gripping the sill. The only feeling he had was one of pity for Hugh. He was not angry that this boy, with whom he had tried to be friendly and who had always resented his advances, suspected him of a mean trick. His conscience was clear, so far as that went. But he wanted every one to like him, not because he desired popularity, but because he had only feelings of friendship for his fellow students and was possessed of the not unnatural desire to have these feelings reciprocated. What was more, it was no part of his nature to be suspicious of other people, and it was a hard blow for him to realize that he was the object of suspicion himself.

"Hugh,—" he said.

The silence was broken. Immediately Hugh found his tongue. The color flamed into his face, and then receding, left him paler than before. He threw his right arm forward and pointed an accusing forefinger at Henry.

"You low, dirty scoundrel," he cried. "What do you mean? What do you mean?" He paused, choked by the rush of his emotions.

Henry drew back and winced as if he had been struck. Before he could say anything Hugh burst forth again.

"You put George Dodd up to that," he almost shouted. "You knew that was my poem. You thought it would be sport to expose me before the whole college, you hound. For a long time you've plotted something like this. Don't deny it," he cried as Henry made as if to speak. "Don't deny it. You know it's true. I know your motives, too, and like you they're cowardly. I've been aware of what you were trying to do for a long time, but I did think there was enough decency in your mean hide to prevent your dragging a lady into it. You're always boasting that you're a gentleman." He brought his clenched right fist down upon the open palm of his left hand. "After what you've done this morning I hope you'll never make any false claims to that title again, for God knows you have no right to it."

Henry remained leaning against the window sash. His look never wavered from Hugh's face, and he seemed scarcely to wink. The three other boys had not moved since Hugh's entrance into the room; the drama being acted before

them held them breathless, fascinated, stunned. Each one of them resented with all his soul the false accusations being made against their friend, the lovable boy who they knew had not a mean speck in his body. And yet they were too overcome by the whole proceeding to offer any open protest.

"Where did you get that poem anyway?" demanded Hugh, his voice rising higher and higher. "Where did you get it, I say? You stole it from my desk, you snooping dog, that's where you got it. You sneaked into my room like a common thief and stole it. Then, afraid to read it yourself, you got some one else to do it for you. Not only a thief, but a coward. You, who hang around with common soldiers, and the swine who frequent the ale houses. A good-for-nothing thief, and a coward!"

"Hugh," said Henry in a low voice, "you're beside yourself. You don't realize what you are saying."

"Oh, yes, I do," Hugh fairly shouted. "I realize exactly what I'm saying. I'm calling you a dog and a coward and a thief. And what's more every name of them applies to you. Can you deny that you ever saw that poem before

this morning? That is, can you deny it and tell the truth?"

"No," said Henry, "I can't."

"You hear?" demanded Hugh shrilly. "He admits he saw it before, and that proves that everything I have said is true. Not that I needed any proof. His own face at breakfast was as clear a confession of guilt as any one could wish."

"Let me explain," said Henry, still in the same low voice.

"Explain nothing!" shrieked Hugh. "Explain why you're a thief and a scoundrel and a coward? The explanation is that you are those things, that's all."

"Listen to me, Hugh," said Henry, and his voice was harder than it had been, though he evidently was trying desperately to control it. "You are beside yourself. You don't realize what you are saying."

"You told me that a moment ago," sneered Hugh.

Henry ignored the interruption. "You have accused me of a lot of things that no gentleman stands for ordinarily. You suspect me of be-

ing responsible for what happened at breakfast this morning, and possibly there is some reason why suspicion should point to me. Certainly you think there is. I did see that poem last night, but if you'll let me explain the circumstances to you, I think you'll understand that I had nothing to do with the performance this morning."

"That's right, Hugh," Samuel Pierson interposed. "Let him explain."

"You keep out of this," cried Hugh savagely. "It's none of your affair."

"Wait, Sam," said Henry, holding up his hand and looking at Samuel appealingly, for that hot-blooded young man was starting for Hugh with clenched fists and eyes blazing. Sam subsided.

"I can't explain everything about this business," Henry continued, turning to Hugh once more, "but I can tell you what I know about it, and if you'll just believe me I can readily convince you that I am entirely innocent."

"You can't convince me of anything," said Hugh contemptuously, "because I wouldn't believe you under oath. If you want me to speak

more plainly I don't mind saying that in addition to all those other things I consider you a damned liar."

Henry caught his breath sharply and stood up straight. Thomas, Samuel and John watching him, their hearts pounding, their breath coming in quick gasps, saw the lines around his mouth harden, his jaw set, his nostrils distend themselves, and his eyes flash with a steely-green light. Hugh stood stock-still in the center of the room, white-lipped and still.

"Hugh," said Henry in a voice that was scarcely above a whisper and yet which seemed to thunder in the ears of the occupants of the room, "no man alive can call me a liar and not apologize or fight." He took three steps forward and stood facing Hugh, an arm's length away.

A cardinal bird practiced his coaxing song in a tree outside the window, students laughed and talked in the hallway, but in this particular room of Nassau Hall these sounds were not noticed. The drama had reached its climax, and nothing else was of interest.

"I will not apologize," said Hugh evenly.

Quick as a flash Henry raised his right arm

and with the palm of his hand slapped Hugh full in the face.

At that moment the bell in the tower started to ring. The half-hour period was over, and recitations were commencing again. Thomas, John and Samuel crowded forward, interposing themselves between Hugh and Henry.

"This can't be settled here," cried Thomas. "Later."

"Stony Brook, by the road past the Quaker Meeting House at half-past three this afternoon," said John. "How will that do?"

"Suits me," said Henry shortly.

"And me," said Hugh. He turned and passed out of the door, a red splotch showing on his left cheek.

CHAPTER X

BY STONY BROOK

Henry Stirling did not distinguish himself in the class-room that day. Try as he would he could not concentrate his mind on his studies. Even in Ontology, his favorite study and the only one in which he was regarded by his teachers as really proficient, he failed badly. The passage from Tully's Orations, which Thomas had translated for him that morning and which he thought he knew perfectly, was a complete mystery to him when he was called upon to render it. Logic was beyond his powers of comprehension, and the subject of Astronomy seemed as far removed from him as the stars themselves.

His mental state was a natural one under the circumstances, but not one he could very well explain to the tutors. They had never thought much of Henry's abilities as a student and failed to understand why a boy at college should seem to prefer play to work. Many a

time, individually and collectively, they had told him as much. Only two days previously Mr. Smith had warned him that unless he showed marked improvement he would be obliged to report the matter to President Burr.

Henry intended to work, he tried hard to study, but somehow his mind would wander away from his books. The pages of a Greek text spread open before him would always grow blurred after a little time, and he would find himself thinking of some shady brook, or the cool quiet of the woods and the song of birds, or of some fine dog he had observed recently. He loved Nature and he loved all animals; once he had fought for nearly an hour with a stable boy he had found abusing a kitten. Mixed with his love of Nature and animals was a curious liking for strange sorts of people. Hugh had accused him of associating with soldiers and the frequenters of ale houses. This was true. He did associate with such people and frankly enjoyed their company. "The only people I know who act naturally," was the way he described them to John Ayres, his roommate. When John had protested that they were coarse and not gentlemen, Henry admitted it freely. But they inter-

ested him, he said, and he, therefore, continued to seek their company. There were many soldiers quartered in Prince Town in those days, men engaged in the French and Indian Wars, and Henry enjoyed especially their accounts of the campaigns in which they had participated.

To-day he was not thinking of these things, however, any more than of lessons. His affair with Hugh Harris occupied practically all of his thoughts. As he sat in the Latin class and looked at Mr. Smith he wondered if that learned man who talked on and on about the subject they were studying realized that a member of his own family was responsible for his poor recitation. True, Miss Smith was an innocent cause of the trouble, but none the less the trouble could be traced directly to her. Henry was too polite to wish even to himself that she was on the other side of the earth, but he did wish that Mr. Smith's children had been two boys instead of two girls.

Noon time came at last, and with it dinner. The meal was a trying one for Henry; Hugh sat opposite him again and it was a trial to keep from looking at him. Moreover, the situation was made more difficult by the fact that a num-

ber of the students did not hesitate to tax Hugh with the authorship of the poem. It was inevitable that the initials, "H. H.," with which it was signed should be traced to Hugh, and that some of the boys should consider it amusing to tease him about it. Hugh paid no attention to them, however. He ate his meal in glum silence, paying strict attention to his food and noticing nothing else. George Dodd was not present at dinner. John Ayres had tried to find him during the morning and get him to explain how he came by the poem and perhaps thus avert the fight scheduled for that afternoon. Immediately after breakfast, however, word had come to George that his father in Trenton had been suddenly taken ill. He had, therefore, obtained permission to visit him, and had left town.

"It wouldn't have done any good anyway," said Thomas. "Hugh called Henry a liar and that is what the fight's about."

"But Hugh might have apologized."

Thomas merely shrugged his shoulders.

At three o'clock that afternoon Henry walked out of Nassau Hall in company with John Ayres, Samuel Pierson and Thomas Spencer.

The four boys turned west when they came to The Broad Street and started in the direction of Stony Brook, about a mile distant. The day was warm for that season of the year and the sun was shining brightly. A few patches of snow still remained in the well-shaded spots, but these last vestiges of winter were fast disappearing.

They talked but little as they walked. There were but few people on the street. They tipped their hats to President Burr, who was looking out from the study window of his new home adjoining Nassau Hall. They passed the house of Mr. Fitz Randolph, with its little burying ground in the rear, and further on, on the opposite side of the highway, "Morven," the home of Mr. Richard Stockton, one of the trustees of the college and a member of the first class to graduate, when the college was located at Elisabethtown. He was out in front of his charming new home as the boys went by, inspecting a row of catalpa trees he had recently had set out. A quarter of a mile beyond his house the road dipped and the willows marking the course of Stony Brook came into view. Coming to the brook they turned to the left by

Bruyere's Mills and followed it a quarter of a mile until they reached an open space, from where the outlines of the little Quaker Meeting House could be dimly seen through the trees.

"A queer place for a fight," said Samuel, "in back of a meeting house dedicated to worship by people who believe so strongly in peace."

"As good a place as any," muttered John. "I don't believe in fighting myself."

Henry looked at him sharply. "Under no circumstances?" he asked.

"Under some circumstances there seems to be no other course," said John. "This I regard as one of them."

"God knows I don't want to fight," said Henry bitterly. "The whole thing nauseates me, but what else can I do?" He faced his three companions and spread his arms out to them appealingly. "There are some things a gentleman just can't stand for, that's all."

"Of course," exclaimed John. "And you know we're with you heart and soul, don't you?"

"Certainly I do," said Henry. "What time is it?"

Thomas consulted his watch, a prized possession bequeathed to him by his grandfather. "Twenty-five minutes after three," he reported.

"Here they come," said John.

Hugh Harris appeared through the trees. With him was Joseph Leonard, a fellow townsman of his from Philadelphia, to act as one of his seconds, and John Davis to act as the other. Neither of these boys was a particular friend of Hugh, so far as the others present were aware, but that was unimportant after all, and something that need not concern them.

Hugh was extremely pale and nervous. He paced up and down while Joseph Leonard conferred with John Ayres. At the conclusion of their conference a square was marked out on the soft ground with the end of a stick. The seconds agreed that the fight was to go on until one or the other of the principals acknowledged himself beaten, or in the opinion of the seconds was so badly bruised as to make it advisable to call a halt.

Joseph Leonard had brought along a brace of pistols and argued at first for a regular duel at thirty paces, but John would not listen to the

suggestion. To settle the argument by such means he maintained might result fatally; Henry desired no such outcome. Joseph did not press the point strongly, and Samuel whispered to Thomas that no doubt his suggestion had been nothing more than a bluff. The college had strict rules against duelling anyway, and any one convicted of having participated in a duel was almost certain to be expelled.

The principals removed their coats, waistcoats and stocks. They rolled up their sleeves and faced each other in the center of the clearing. As to height and weight, they seemed about evenly matched, the advantage, if there were any, being on the side of Hugh. He seemed more nervous than his opponent, his glance roved hither and yon, only resting on Henry's face for occasional fleeting moments. Henry, on the other hand, stood perfectly still, his gaze never once wavering from his adversary; he was as pale as Hugh, but seemed more at his ease.

"When I say 'three,'" announced Joseph Leonard. "No hitting below the belt, remember. A clean fight is what we intend to have."

"All right," said Hugh peevishly. Henry as-

sented by an almost imperceptible nod of his head, but did not alter the direction of his gaze.

"Ready?" asked Joseph.

Absolute silence prevailed in the little clearing.

"One, two, three!"

Hugh snarled like some wounded animal. Head down he rushed at Henry, swinging his fists blindly. Henry sidestepped and danced away. Again Hugh rushed, and Henry contented himself by merely warding off his blows, making no strenuous effort to strike back. He was calm and collected. Hugh, on the other hand, seemed to be infuriated by the failure of his blows to reach their mark, and swung his arms like flails, striving desperately to reach Henry's face. Still Henry remained on the defensive. He kept backing away from Hugh or sidestepping as the need of the moment required. But he was watching his chance.

Hugh was tiring. He was spending his strength prodigally, and his efforts were too violent to continue long. His breath, too, was failing, while his blows, when they did strike Henry, fell harmlessly on his protecting forearms. At the end of about two minutes Hugh

eased up for breath. He dropped his arms to his sides for a moment and quick as a flash Henry struck. His right fist shot out and caught Hugh squarely over the left eye. Instantly blood began to trickle down Hugh's face. He staggered back, then with a roar of rage he rushed in again. Once more Henry tried to sidestep, but this time his foot slipped. Hugh grappled with him and they went down together, Hugh raining blows on his opponent's face.

"Here, here," shouted John. "None of that. Let him up."

Joseph sprang to the side of the two fighters, pulled them apart, and got them to their feet once more.

Henry's face was covered with dirt and grime, and the blood Hugh had rubbed off his own face. Both boys were breathing hard. For an instant they stood facing each other without moving, then they rushed simultaneously. Stung by the blows he had received, Henry was fast losing his coolness, and he, too, was ready to fight savagely, and let science go flying to the four winds. Bang, bang, bang, they stood up toe to toe and traded punches. The blood from

the cut over Hugh's eye now covered his whole face, his hands and arms were stained red from the blood he had wiped out of his eyes. Nor was Henry unmarked. One eye was swollen and discolored, and blood trickled out of the side of his mouth from a dislocated tooth.

Hugh still kept up his rushing tactics. Head down he charged in at Henry, swinging his arms, driving home his blows with all the strength he possessed. And those of his punches which found their mark were having their effect. They were body blows and they hurt. One wild lunge caught Henry squarely in the pit of the stomach, and bent him over almost double. His knees sagged and he wavered uncertainly on his feet. Quick to realize his advantage, Hugh bored in more fiercely than ever. The blow had knocked nearly all of Henry's breath out of his body, and weakened him so that most of his strength was gone. His eyes were glassy and his arms hung limply by his sides, the muscles numbed and paralyzed, unable to respond to the will of their possessor. Hugh rained blow after blow on his weakened adversary, the glow of victory shining wickedly in his blood-covered eyes.

Maddened with pain he rushed again

"Now, you cur, I've got you!" he snarled. He set himself to deliver the blow which would end the fight then and there.

Henry held up his hands weakly. His brain was clear enough to permit of his understanding that he must try to defend himself, but his strength was sapped. Instinct more than anything else told him to put out his arms in defense. He knew that in ten seconds his strength would return to him again. But what would happen during those ten seconds? Luck decided this question. Hugh's blow, the one intended to end the fight, was deflected by his outstretched hand, and only grazed the side of his jaw. The energy Hugh had put into it threw him off his balance and before he could recover Henry had backed away, stalling for time, fighting desperately on the defensive. Hugh's chance had gone. With every passing second Henry was gaining back his strength and with it his confidence.

The little group of five spectators had been silent during this brief period of crisis. Three of them, Henry's friends, had thought the end had come, and when they saw their champion ward off defeat, saw his strength and confidence

return to him, they shouted their joy. Hugh, balked of victory and stung by the cheers of Henry's adherents, grew angrier than ever. He roared like some wounded animal, his breath came in short gasps; tousled, blood-stained, and half mad with rage he tore after Henry again.

Henry was not to be caught napping a second time. As Hugh came at him, head down, he stepped aside and straightened up his opponent with a blow that caught him fairly on the end of the nose. Blood gushed from the bruised member until Hugh's shirt was a sight to behold. Maddened with pain he rushed again. Henry, now perfectly calm, drove home a stinging blow full on Hugh's jaw which sent his head back with a jerk. Henry was entire master of himself now. He wasted no efforts, measured every blow, and made every one of them count. He rocked Hugh first to one side and then the other, with crushing, bruising blows that landed with deadly accuracy and machinelike precision.

There was no doubt about the outcome now. Hugh was beaten. His seconds knew it, Thomas, John and Samuel knew it. Henry knew it. Perhaps Hugh himself knew it. But his courage never failed for an instant. He

carried the fight to his antagonist relentlessly. His rushes were growing weaker however, his blows wilder and wilder. A look of pity came over Henry's face as he realized the condition of his antagonist, and as Hugh rushed in at him for what was to prove the last time, he took one quick step to the left, placed his hand on the top of Hugh's head and shoved. Hugh shot forward, his knees wobbling, sinking lower and lower to the ground, until finally his legs gave way entirely and he pitched forward on his face, flat on the earth.

CHAPTER XI

TROUBLE WITH THE FACULTY

HENRY stood for a moment, looking down at the prostrate figure of his late antagonist. Then he rubbed his sleeve across his face and knelt on one knee by his side and rolled him over. Hugh looked up dazedly, then he recognized Henry and put out his hand.

"You beat me," he said huskily.

"Let's forget about it," said Henry. "John, soak your handkerchief in the brook and bring it here."

John had already started for Stony Brook to do this very thing. He returned in a moment and found Hugh sitting up.

"Don't worry about me," exclaimed Hugh, with a wry smile. "I'm perfectly all right."

"Yes," said Joseph, "you go wash your own face, Henry. I'll take care of Hugh. You're pretty looking sights, both of you."

Henry made his way to the brook, knelt on a

large flat stone on the bank, and forming a cup of his two hands, dashed water over his face and head. He felt weak and "shaky." His head ached and his stomach was sore from the blows he had received. Nor did he enjoy any feeling of elation at having come off victorious in the fight. He had fought because he had believed it was necessary, but the thought of it nauseated him now. He felt nothing but disgust at the whole performance. And yet he knew he would go through it again under similar circumstances.

When he returned to the clearing Hugh was on his feet. Joseph had helped him wash his face with the wet handkerchief, and was now brushing off his clothes. Hugh's left eye was almost closed, and there was an ugly red and blue swelling all around it; his lips, too, were swollen and he still was spitting blood at frequent intervals. Henry was well battered himself. He had a black and blue lump on the right temple, and one of his cheeks was badly cut. Both boys felt weak and unsteady on their feet. Moreover, there was a certain shyness between them, they avoided looking at each other and exchanged no words.

"Let's go back," exclaimed Henry, anxious to leave the scene of the fight.

"Come along," said John, and started at once. Henry went close behind him, followed by Thomas and Samuel. They called perfunctory good-bys to the three other boys and talked but little themselves as they walked. A feeling of depression had settled over them, they all felt that the fight had been an unfortunate occurrence, and in spite of the fact that the outcome had been as they had wished, it was most unsatisfactory to know that Hugh still was not aware of the real circumstances and did not know that he alone was to blame for his quarrel with Henry.

"Are you going to tell him about it?" Thomas inquired.

"No," said Henry. "Let him find out for himself."

The four boys walked on in silence for a time.

"I tried to explain to him once," said Henry presently, bringing up the subject again. "I feel that I have done all that should be expected of me."

"You're quite right, Henry," said Samuel. "It's for him to come to you."

"I think so," said Henry. "I've done my part."

"Will the authorities do anything about it?" asked John.

"The college authorities?" said Thomas. "Why should they?"

"There's a strict rule against duelling. Maybe they will also consider a plain fight a serious offense."

"Probably they will," said Henry. "Everything is an offense with them, so far as I can see. No doubt I'll be expelled." He laughed a hollow laugh. "I don't care much if I am."

"Don't talk like that, Henry," cried John. "That's nonsense and you know it. Maybe they'll never hear about the fight anyway."

"They can see from the look of my face that I didn't spend this afternoon studying Greek," said Henry. "No one will have to tell them about it."

"Baldridge might report you," said Samuel. "He's a mean old codger."

"And he doesn't like me any too well," said Henry. "But what's the use of talking about it; it does no good."

The shadows were lengthening when they ar-

rived back at Nassau Hall, and candles were burning in a few of the rooms. No one paid any particular attention to them as they entered the building, and the bruised condition of Henry's face went unnoticed. He hurried to his room and did everything he could to remove the traces of the blows he had received. First of all he took off all his clothes and bathed; the cold water was extremely refreshing and made him feel better. He stretched out on the bed and John applied cold compresses to his face in an effort to reduce the swelling and make him presentable for supper and evening prayers. In the midst of these proceedings there came a knock at the door. Henry sprang up from bed, and seizing a book from the table, sat down hurriedly and pretended to be studying. John opened the door.

George Dodd entered the room. Right hand extended he hastened to Henry's side.

"I'm sorry," he exclaimed. "I'm more sorry than I can say. I am the cause of all this trouble, and I want to apologize as humbly as I can!"

Henry rose to his feet and threw the book upon the bed. "I thought it was Baldridge or

Mr. Smith at the door," he said with a laugh. "Sit down, George."

"Will you forgive me?" George persisted. "I never realized that reading that silly poem would lead to this."

"How did you find out about it?" Henry demanded. "And how is your father?"

"My father is not seriously ill, thank you. I was able to leave him this afternoon, and riding back I met Hugh Harris, Joseph Leonard and John Davis on the road. Naturally I stopped to speak with them, and then I saw Hugh's face. He looks as if a horse had trampled on him, Henry. What did you do to him?"

"Look at me," said Henry.

"You're unmarked compared to him. Well, I inquired what it was all about, and then I heard the story of the fight. I realized instantly that I was to blame, and I can't tell you how badly I feel. If only I hadn't been called to Trenton this morning I would have been on hand to explain, and then it would not have happened."

"What is the explanation?" John inquired.

"Why last night I was coming down the hall

and saw a piece of paper on the floor. I picked it up and stuffed it in my pocket, and then I never thought of it again until this morning. When I examined it and read the poem I realized what a treasure it was, and I decided to read it at breakfast. You know the rest."

"Didn't you notice the initials 'H. H.'?" asked John.

"Yes, of course, but I didn't think much about them."

"Then you didn't know that Hugh was the author?"

"No, I didn't. At any rate it really didn't occur to me that I was injuring anybody by reading the poem. I suppose I should have thought of that side of it, but I didn't. It was all a joke to me."

"Did you tell all this to Hugh?" asked Henry.

"Indeed I did."

"What did he say?"

Before George could reply the door flew open and Hugh burst into the room.

"Henry," he cried. "I'm an idiot. George has told you I suppose?"

Henry laughed. "He has," he replied.

"Let's shake hands and forget the whole thing."

"I wish I could," exclaimed Hugh, "but I made such an ass of myself, and lost my head so completely that I don't see how you can ever want to speak to me or see me again."

"On the contrary," said Henry, "I hope we shall see a great deal of each other from now on. We know each other better now and should get on famously. And it was grand exercise, wasn't it?"

"Too violent," said Hugh, and everybody laughed. Then the bell rang, summoning them to supper.

"I wish we could omit this meal," said Henry. "Hugh, you and I are scarcely presentable. Worst of all I hate the questions we shall be asked."

"You'd better come," said John. "All of us are subject to four-pence fine for being away from our rooms for longer than an hour and a half this afternoon as it is. Old Baldridge will surely have noticed it, and if you two don't appear at supper and evening prayers he'll do his best to make trouble for you."

"John is right, Henry," said George.

"You've got to face it some time, and you might as well do it now and be done with it. The longer you put things off the harder they are."

"All right, Mr. Philosopher," laughed Henry. "Come on, Hugh. We don't have to say anything until some one asks us, and then we can say we ran into each other. That's true enough."

"Agreed," said Hugh. "Here's hoping Baldridge is unobserving to-night."

Mr. Baldridge, however, was not unobserving that night. Still it is possible that he might not have noticed the bruised faces of the two erstwhile combatants had it not been for an unforeseen event. Mr. Baldridge was a pompous little man, and greatly concerned about his dignity, and its being given due recognition by the student body. When it happened, therefore, that in seating himself at the table that evening he should have slipped and fallen sprawling on the floor his dignity was hurt. When the students were unable to control their delight at his mishap and laughed loudly at his expense he was furiously angry. He sprang to his feet and faced the table, purple with rage. Everybody present did his best to check his mirth,

for they knew Mr. Baldridge's temper and realized that he would try to make a scapegoat of somebody and make him suffer for the spectacle he had made of himself.

Now Henry Stirling had been particularly pleased when the luckless steward had been precipitated to the floor. Mr. Baldridge's pomposity had always afforded him secret mirth, and when his dignity was so badly ruffled in the presence of the students it seemed almost too good to be true. He laughed, and he laughed, and he laughed. The harder he tried to stop the harder he laughed. He became almost hysterical, and his laughter continued long after all the others had ceased. The result was, of course, that the burden of Mr. Baldridge's anger fell on him.

"Mr. Stirling," he spluttered, his face looking as if it were about to burst into flame, "you are acting towards one of your superiors in a disrespectful and insulting manner. You are fined five shillings, and you will go to your room at once. Furthermore, you may expect to hear from me later."

Henry arose from his seat and started for the door. His heart was heavy, as he realized

that once again he was in trouble with the college authorities, but even so he could not entirely check his laughter. It had got the better of him, and as he passed out of the room, his shoulders still shook with laughter, and he snickered audibly.

Arrived at his room, the possibilities involved in the occurrence came home to him with full force. He was tired and sore, and he felt discouraged with life. Everything seemed to be going against him. He had made up his mind only the day previous that he was going to take his college work seriously and try honestly to do better, to correct the impression of laziness and indifference the faculty had of him. Then a chain of circumstances he could not help had caught him in their toils and he was in worse trouble than ever.

"What's the use?" he muttered, and threw himself face downward on his bed.

CHAPTER XII

BRADDOCK'S DEFEAT

The upshot of Henry's laughter at Mr. Baldridge was that the steward found out all about his fight with Hugh, reported him to President Burr, and as punishment he was suspended from college for ten days, in addition to the numerous fines imposed upon him. His first impulse was to quit Nassau Hall for good and all, and only his more sober judgment told him that that was not the way to act. He felt he had been done an injustice in this particular case, but this was all the more reason, he decided, after thinking things over, to stay on and prove that he was made of the proper stuff, no matter what was thought of him at the present time.

He did not go to his home at Perth Amboy, for the trip was a difficult one at that time of year, and the thought of facing his family and friends was, under the circumstances, something he did not care about. He knew his father

would approve of his action in resenting Hugh's insult to him, but he did not relish the idea of having to explain his suspension to the neighbors. He, therefore, decided to take up his residence near the college for the ten-day period, spend most of his time in study and return to college better equipped than ever perhaps to pursue his course successfully.

He found lodgings with a family named Van Sciver in the little village of Kings Town, three miles distant from Prince Town. The Van Scivers had recently moved to Jersey from Virginia, and were a young couple who had been married for only a few months. They had a small farm, were rather poor and consequently glad to increase their meager financial resources by the money Henry paid for his board and lodging.

They took Henry in and treated him exactly like a member of their family. They were simple folk, but extremely industrious and ambitious to make the most of their limited opportunities, and Henry was attracted to them from the start.

"You did right in fighting when he called you a liar," said Mr. Van Sciver, commenting on

the fight with Hugh. "No man who is not a liar is going to stand for being called one."

Van Sciver had been a soldier. He had served under Colonel George Washington in the disastrous attempt two years previously to recover Fort Du Quesne from the French and Indians. Many soldiers fighting for the British Crown in the French and Indian Wars were quartered in and about Prince Town, and Henry was always intensely interested in listening to the tales they had to tell of the campaigns in which they had participated. As soon as he discovered that Mr. Van Sciver had been present at the defeat of General Braddock he was not content to rest until the story had been recounted to him in every detail.

"Of course you know all about the events leading up to it," said Mr. Van Sciver as they were seated in front of the big hearth fire one evening, "how the French and English had been quarreling over the lands along the Ohio River, and how the French built a fort at the forks of the Ohio, which would give them command of practically all that region. This was Fort Du Quesne, named in honor of the governor of

Canada. Colonel Washington, as you know, had been commissioned to raise two hundred men and build forts there before the French could do it. But he was too late. You have heard how he started out from Virginia, dragging cannon over the great wooded hills, bridging streams, cutting down trees and doing everything he could to prepare the way for the larger army which was to follow.

"Well, when he got within about forty miles of his destination he heard from a friendly Indian Chief that the French were close by and intended to attack. When he heard this news Washington fell back a short distance to a big marsh he had recently crossed, and there he built a fort. This fort, as you know, was called Fort Necessity. Pretty soon news came to Colonel Washington, who, by the way, I consider a wonderful man, that there was a party of French lying in ambush close at hand. Well, Washington didn't wait for anything more; the night was pitch dark and the rain was falling in torrents, but he started right out. With forty men he set off for the camp of Half-King, the friendly Mingo Chief, and reached his destination just about dawn. Soon after sunrise his

band and the Indian recruits he had got were on the march for the hiding place of the French. That is characteristic of the man; if he decides to do a thing he does it and nothing on the top of the earth can stop him.

"Single file they went, marching in parallel lines, Washington, of course, at the head of his men. Well, they found the place where the Frenchmen were ambushed all right, and Washington being in the lead was the first to see the enemy. 'Fire' he shouts, and his own gun was the first one to be discharged. For about fifteen minutes the fight lasted and then the French, or what was left of them, made off. Eleven Frenchmen were killed, including the commander of the party, over twenty were captured, and only about fifteen out of the original fifty got away."

"What were Washington's losses?" asked Henry.

"Only one Virginian was killed," said Mr. Van Sciver, "and he was a man who had exposed himself unnecessarily."

"That was the first fight of the war?" said Henry.

"The very first, and as you know it caused

the greatest excitement all over this country and in Europe. The war was on in earnest from that moment. More troops joined Washington until he had about four hundred men in his command. He was starting to press on towards Fort Du Quesne when word came to him that a French force with over a thousand Indian allies was marching on him. Naturally there was nothing to do but fall back to Fort Necessity again, strengthen the place as best he could and wait for the attack. It came right soon. A few days later six hundred French and three hundred Indians attacked the fort, and in addition they had large reserves hidden in the woods. All day long the fight continued and when evening came the ammunition was running low, so a parley was proposed. The upshot of it was, as you know, that Washington surrendered the fort and the prisoners he had taken; he agreed not to erect any fortifications west of the mountains for a year on the condition that he and his men should be allowed to return to their homes unmolested."

"Colonel Washington's conduct was approved, wasn't it?" asked Henry.

"Approved and commended. Every one rec-

ognized that he had done the only thing possible under the circumstances."

"And so ended the first campaign of the war," said Henry.

"Quite right," said Mr. Van Sciver, knocking the ashes out of his pipe by pounding it on the heel of his boot. He refilled it from a tobacco pouch carried in his hip pocket.

"You were not in any of that fighting, were you?"

"No. My turn came later."

He lighted his pipe from the glowing end of a stick pulled out of the fire, puffed vigorously at it for a moment and then continued.

"When news reached England that the French had obtained possession of the Ohio Valley plans were immediately set in motion to recover it. In the meantime the French were working as hard as they could among the Indians, stirring up hatred against the English and urging them to kill every Englishman they saw. The British Government realized the danger and sent General Braddock with two regiments of regulars to Virginia to lead an expedition against Fort Du Quesne, and campaigns were also planned against the French

in other sections of the country, as you know. You also know how pleased the colonists all were when they realized that the home government recognized their peril and was preparing to take vigorous action.

"General Braddock arrived in Virginia with his two regiments of regulars and there was great rejoicing. He was a distinguished officer, belonged to the famous Coldstream Guards, and British regulars were considered invincible. Every one felt that the terrorism spread along the border by the French and Indians would soon be stopped once and for all. The colonists laid aside the grievances they had had against the home government and every one joined the preparations for war with the greatest enthusiasm. Braddock had about a thousand regulars and there were about an equal number of provincials under Washington. I am proud to say that I was one of them.

"From the start Washington feared trouble, I think. General Braddock was a hot-headed Irishman, who had only contempt for the provincial troops, wouldn't take advice, and was absolutely bull-headed about anything on which he had made up his mind. Things dragged

along. Toward the end of May a pioneer force was sent out to clear a pathway through the woods and collect stores at Fort Necessity. Naturally the French were watching all these preparations and knew just what was going on. This move was the signal for them to collect all their Indian allies, and strengthen their own position before the British could attack. Colonel Washington was getting more and more impatient all the time and finally, about the middle of June, he persuaded General Braddock to send twelve hundred men on ahead in light marching order with the artillery, and have the remainder follow more slowly. Strange to say, the General consented."

"Why do you say 'strange?'" asked Henry.

"If you had known General Braddock you wouldn't ask that question," said Mr. Van Sciver, emphatically. "He was the most pig-headed man I ever heard of. He wouldn't listen to anybody. Least of all he wanted advice from a provincial officer, a colonel of volunteers. Now, Colonel Washington knows Indian fighting better than any man in the colonies, I believe, and he kept trying to give General Brad-

dock the benefit of his knowledge. With what success you can imagine from the fact that these British regulars—as brave as any soldiers in the world, by the way—were led through the forests in close marching order, dressed in bright red coats, banners flying and bands playing. That's all right for European warfare perhaps, but not for this country. Why they were the easiest marks imaginable for any one who wanted to shoot at them.

"Well, finally on the ninth day of July—I shall never forget the date—we reached the Monongahela River and forded it. We were then only about twelve miles from Fort Du Quesne."

"Still marching in solid platoons, I suppose?"

"Exactly," said Mr. Van Sciver. "At least the regulars were. Colonel Washington knew how dangerous it was and he pleaded with General Braddock to deploy his men in open order. I heard him myself. What he wanted was to use the same method of fighting in the forests that the Indians themselves use, which, of course, is no more than sensible. But General Braddock would pay no attention to him. In

fact, he got angry and demanded to know by what right a provincial colonel presumed to tell a British general what to do. Well, Washington was right about it, as you know. He feared an ambush and we ran into one all right. It was just about noon."

Mr. Van Sciver pounded his fist on the arm of his chair. "It makes me furiously angry every time I think of it," he exclaimed. "All so unnecessary." He said nothing for a time, but his jaw was set and his fist clenched as he lived those moments over again in his thoughts. Henry said nothing, for he could see that the story teller was deeply affected. As for Mrs. Van Sciver, she kept on knitting placidly; the story her husband was telling was one she had heard many times before and her interest in it had waned. The click of her knitting needles was the only noise to disturb the quiet prevailing in the little room. Finally her husband plucked another burning stick out of the fire, lighted his pipe once more and continued.

"We were passing through a small ravine. The regulars were in front of us because they felt that the front place belonged to them. We were all nervous as could be because we

were pretty well into the enemy's territory and we feared an ambuscade. That ravine looked like a perfect spot for one, too, high banks on each side and heavily wooded. Then the red coats that the regulars were wearing made them the most conspicuous marks you ever saw. All of a sudden it came. Have you ever heard the war-whoop?"

"Never," said Henry.

"Well it's blood-curdling and terrifying," said Mr. Van Sciver. "If you've never heard it it is indescribable. When six hundred Indians give it all at once it's enough to make every hair on your head stand straight up. That's just what happened that day. And not an Indian in sight. Remember that; these terrible war-whoops and not an Indian in sight. Well the whole army stood stock-still when they heard the yells. Before they had got their senses back, bullets poured into them from three directions, front and both sides. As for arrows, the air was full of them. Can you imagine the slaughter? Why it was like firing into a flock of blackbirds with a load of buckshot.

"Braddock's men were in a panic instantly. I don't blame them much. But I do blame their

commanding officer for leading them into such a trap. He was no coward, though. His men were thrown into confusion and he was out in front, trying desperately to rally them, to inspire them by his own example to fight back. And his officers were right with him. There were eighty-six English officers there when the fight began and sixty-three of them were either killed or wounded. General Braddock himself had five horses shot from under him. Then finally he too was shot and fell mortally wounded."

"What about Washington all this time?" said Henry.

" 'What about Washington'?" demanded Mr. Van Sciver. "You ought to have seen him. He seemed to be everywhere at once. The minute he saw the panic of the regulars, saw them throwing down their arms and running like a lot of scared rabbits, he rallied his own men to cover their retreat. With General Braddock carried from the field the chief command fell upon him. He knew there was no use in bothering with the regulars, but he did know that unless some one held the enemy off for a time every one of those red-coated soldiers would

have been hunted down by some red-skinned savage and killed like a rat."

"And scalped," said Henry.

"No doubt. Well, it wasn't much fun I can tell you. The Indians and the French had the advantage of being on the ground first and so they had the choice of positions. I personally got behind the roots of a fallen tree, and many a bullet went 'thump' into the big ball of earth the roots had pulled up with them when the tree went down. But I didn't get a scratch. Most of our men were killed, poor fellows, and that shows how well they covered the retreat of the regulars. Why out of our three Virginia companies there were only thirty men left alive."

"The regulars, how about them?" Henry asked.

"Half of them were killed," said Mr. Van Sciver, "but of the provincials, why nearly all of them were killed. Oh, it was terrible. Those Indians were red fiends. And they flitted around among the trees like shadows, now here, now there, picking out their victims as coolly as if they were sitting on the edge of one of their cornfields shooting crows. It was too much for

the regulars; their officers did their best to rally them, but they were running like a lot of sheep chased by dogs. They left their dead on the field, cannon were abandoned, horses were lying stretched out stiff on the ground or were rushing off riderless into the forest."

"It must have been frightful."

"Worse than that. It can't be described it was so awful. You can see for yourself at what a disadvantage we were. Caught napping, out in the open, herded together like a lot of animals, we were practically helpless. But George Washington was there, thank God. He rode up and down on his big black horse, calling to his men, encouraging them by word and action, and he put heart into us. If it hadn't been for him I don't know but what we would have started to run after the regulars. But Colonel Washington was our idol, he told us to stay, and of course we did. Why, there wasn't a man in that whole company that wouldn't have gone through hell for him. I don't mean that in any irreverent sense either. It's true. Our fellows were going down on every side, but with Washington out there in front no one had any idea of doing anything but sticking right where

he was and giving all he had in him. When Washington ordered us to fall back,—we were covering the regulars' retreat,—we fell back slowly, fighting inch by inch so as to give the regulars a chance to get away. You see we were all accustomed to the woods and could take care of ourselves, but they would have been as helpless in the forest as babies. Why even if there had been no Indians around I doubt if many of them could have found their way out of the woods alive."

"But what about Colonel Washington?" demanded Henry. "You say he was out in front all the time, and men were being shot down on every side. Why wasn't he killed?"

"There," said Mr. Van Sciver, "you have mentioned one of the mysteries of the age. No one knows why he wasn't killed. He was in plain sight most of the time, for he wanted to keep where his men could see him, and of course if they could see him the enemy could too. But he wasn't even scratched. Two horses were shot from under him, and four bullets passed through his coat. Not a wound did he get. It is almost incredible, for naturally the Indians and the French were singling him out as a mark to

shoot at. I can't help but believe that a Divine Providence was watching over him, and he was spared because there is some still greater and more important work for him to do."

"It does seem so," said Henry.

That night he dreamed of Indians and ambushes, of red-coated soldiers, and men on horseback. Soldiering appealed to Henry and he gave his friends much worriment because he persisted in visiting the taverns in and about Prince Town where the soldiers were in the habit of congregating and swapping stories. Many an evening Henry had violated the rules of the college and neglected his studies by being absent from his room because the soldiers' tales lured him to the taprooms of the inns. He had an ingenious device constructed with a pulley and piece of rope which he used at such times; one end of this crude invention would be fastened to a bed post and the other end put out the window, for through the window and by means of the rope and pulley he made his entrances and exits to and from Nassau Hall when darkness had fallen over the land and students were supposed to be at their studies or asleep. Usually he waited until nine o'clock before sallying

forth, for then the rooms were in darkness and he could go up and down the side of the building by means of the rope with less fear of detection. One evening when he had gone earlier than usual, the tutor making the rounds at nine o'clock had called him by name.

"Are you there, Mr. Ayres?" he had inquired first.

"Yes, sir," said John.

"And you, Mr. Stirling?" he said.

"Yes, sir," said John, doing his best to imitate his roommate's voice and without hesitating an instant. John was always a loyal friend.

CHAPTER XIII

TWO PRESIDENTS

When Henry's term of suspension expired and he returned to Nassau Hall, he could not keep back a feeling of resentment against the members of the faculty, and against President Burr in particular. He could not believe that his infraction of the college rules was serious enough to warrant the punishment he had received. Baldridge had revenged himself in this way, he felt, and as President Burr had been the one who actually pronounced sentence Henry could not help but consider him an important party to the commission of the injustice.

He had resolved to apply himself closely to his studies, however, and he therefore tried honestly to put these grievances out of his mind, and devote himself whole-heartedly to the work of the college. Now Henry was extremely intelligent, and was accustomed to making a success of whatever he undertook seri-

ously. Consequently it was not long before the attitude of the faculty towards him began to undergo a change. Instead of doing only fairly well in his recitations he commenced to do very well indeed, and the tutors, and even President Burr himself, took occasion to compliment him on his altered attitude. Mr. Baldridge, however, continued to treat him with his customary coolness. No doubt the steward sensed the fact that Henry held him in secret contempt, and as is often the case with such men, he tried to get even with him by making things difficult for the young student. Henry knew all this, but he ignored it, and paid as little attention to it as he could. Also he had as few dealings with Mr. Baldridge as possible. So far as he could tell the enmity of the steward did him no serious harm, and he continued in good standing with the faculty.

He became an excellent friend of Hugh Harris. The enmity which has previously existed between the two boys entirely disappeared after the fight, and they spent much of their time in each other's company. Hugh's affection for Miss Smith continued, but did not seem to be reciprocated. The story of the poem and the

fight had of course become common property in the town and the college, and the young lady in question naturally resented the publicity, and held Hugh accountable for it. The fact that his suit made little or no progress, however, drew Hugh and Henry still more closely together. Hugh realized that his friend was not a rival in any way, and he even began to make a confidant of him and seek his advice. Not that he ever got much encouragement. Henry had little interest in girls, considering them something of a nuisance, in fact, and much preferred other topics of conversation.

Spring came to Prince Town, and the warm sunshiny days beckoned Henry out of doors, to the fields and the woods and the streams. Study became more and more irksome. There was a constant struggle between duty and desire and it required all of his will power to keep him at his books. Many a time as he sat by his window with an opened book before him he would start suddenly and realize that for he knew not how long he had been gazing into the trees outside and had completely ignored his lessons. Trees fascinated Henry. He loved to watch the sunlight playing through the leaves,

admire the myriad shades of their shimmering green, and the somber browns of the trunk and branches. It always looked so cool in the tree-tops, and so soft. He recalled many occasions when he had stood and gazed across a valley at a tree-covered hillside, thinking how wonderful it would be if he could fly above it and then plunge down into that enticing-looking mass of green. He wanted to bury his head in the leaves, and feel them cool and smooth against his face.

Swimming holes began to appear to Henry's imagination. He remembered one in particular that he had noticed when walking along Stony Brook with John Ayres early in the winter: a fallen tree bounded its upper end and made an ideal place from which to dive; a steep, overhanging bank was on one side, and opposite a shelving pebbly beach; below was a sharp bend where the stream during centuries of patient waiting at this corner had dug for itself an arm chair out of the bed of the brook in which to rest itself before going on around and investigating the unknown places beyond. The water looked clear and inviting and Henry had marked the spot for further investigation

when warm weather came. He had also made note of places in Stony Brook and the larger Millstone River which seemed likely haunts of fish.

The soft spring breezes blowing in the open window in Nassau Hall brought visions of all these places to Henry, whispered in his ear of them, and told him it was silly to waste his time indoors with Greek and Latin and mathematics. And Henry, if the truth be told, lent a willing ear to the message of the springtime. His high resolves to let nothing interfere with his studies began gradually to become weaker and weaker. He knew in his heart that he would always regret it if he neglected his studies, and he knew it was not necessary for him to neglect them in order to get all he needed of the out of doors. But he was young, and a dreamer. He did not love work. The world of Nature looked so beautiful, and it called to him. Henry responded.

The result was, of course, that once more he began to find himself in disfavor with the faculty. Perhaps they would have dealt easier with him if he had not shown them that he could do good work. His close application to his studies late in the winter had set a precedent,

to which he was expected to adhere, and his neglect of his work convinced the tutors that he was indifferent. This in a sense was true. The essence of the matter was, however, that he was not indifferent to the value of book knowledge, but other things appealed more strongly to his young and restless nature. The class-room seemed dull, study was irksome, and the more the tutors criticized him for his neglect of it, the less he was inclined to take it seriously. President Burr talked with him personally on numerous occasions, and while Henry could not help but agree with all that the slight, nervous, and intensely serious man who was directing the affairs of the infant college, said, he found that when the time came to put his precepts into practice the necessary enthusiasm was lacking.

Mr. Baldridge was quick to notice Henry's lapses, and took delight in making things as difficult for him as possible so that there grew up between these two a well-defined feeling of dislike and enmity. The fact that it was never referred to openly, did not make it any the less bitter. Henry fell into the habit of keeping more and more to himself. He still had his

friends of course,—John, Thomas, Samuel, Hugh and the others liked him as much as they ever did, and he returned their affection. He had lost some of his gayety, however. He realized this, and knew it was wrong, but he seemed unable to help himself. In fact he was not quite certain in his own mind just what the trouble was. Oftentimes he took solitary walks and tried to reason things out,—to Cedar Grove, along Stony Brook, or to Kings Town where he would stop and see his good friends the Van Scivers. Or at night he would climb down his rope ladder and make his way to one of the inns where the gossip and revelry would for the time being make him forget. He became particularly friendly with one of the frequenters of the inns, a young soldier, Jason Work, a youth who had enlisted in the army for the sake of adventure. More than once Henry himself had seriously considered enlisting.

So the spring and summer wore on. July with its heat and humidity made study more difficult than ever. August was more comfortable, but on the last day of that month Governor Jonathan Belcher died. Now Henry had a real affection for his college, and he knew that

through the death of Governor Belcher the institution had lost one of its best friends. It was Governor Belcher who had given of himself unsparingly to get the College of New Jersey started on its career as a seat of learning; he had done as much as any one man perhaps to make Nassau Hall a reality; he had given it its library and assisted it in countless other ways. His death was also a tremendous blow to President Burr, himself in poor health from worry, overwork and care. In fact Mr. Burr was sick and suffering from a high fever while he prepared the sermon he delivered at Governor Belcher's funeral at Elisabethtown on September 4. The strain of this effort was so great that he was forced to take to his bed, and three weeks later his mortal career, too, came to an end. The college was stunned by these two blows coming in such rapid succession, faculty and students were demoralized and the work suffered. Henry did not object to this. In fact if the causes of this condition had not been so serious he would have been delighted.

These were difficult days for the College of New Jersey. The infant institution had

scarcely learned to stand by itself, and Governor Belcher and Aaron Burr had been two of its strongest supports. Commencement, 1757, had been set for September 28, just four days after President Burr's death. It was too late to make any change in plans. The trustees, heavy-hearted, met and went through with the exercises, the Honorable William Smith, a member of the Board, presiding and conferring the usual degrees. Twenty-six students received degrees at this time. The proceedings were all in Latin and Henry found them rather tiresome; in fact no one had much heart for the exercises which ordinarily would have been an occasion for celebration. The cloud which hung over Prince Town cast a shadow over the spirits of the trustees, faculty and students, which interfered sadly with the whole event.

The trustees were not slow in meeting for the selection of a successor to the late president, however. The day following Commencement twenty of them gathered together, and after prayers for guidance, chose the Reverend Jonathan Edwards to be third president of the College of New Jersey. Mr. Edwards was the late

President Burr's father-in-law, a resident of Stockbridge, Massachusetts and a man famous throughout the colonies for his piety and learning. He had entered Yale college when he was thirteen years old and received the first degree in the Arts before reaching the age of seventeen. Before he was nineteen years old he was licensed to preach.

Mr. Edwards accepted the presidency of the college and early in the year 1758 removed to Prince Town. He attended a meeting of the trustees on the sixteenth of February and made his formal acceptance at that time. One week later he was inoculated for smallpox and on the twenty-second of March he died. His active endeavors in behalf of the college therefore lasted not over four or five weeks.

"This is the hardest blow the college has received yet," said Thomas Spencer. "Jonathan Edwards was one of the most famous men in the colonies. Had he lived I believe he would have increased the reputation of the college to such an extent that in a short time it would have been well known not only all over this country but in Europe as well."

"Yes," said Henry, "I think that's true. He

even impressed me, and I had begun to fear I was past hope."

"You're lazy," said John.

"No," said Henry, "I'm indifferent."

"The same thing," said John.

CHAPTER XIV

HENRY HAS AN IDEA

For sixteen months the College of New Jersey was without a president. The choice of a successor had been an exceedingly difficult one for the trustees, and it was not made until May 9, 1759. At that time a meeting of the trustees was held and the Reverend Mr. Samuel Davies was duly elected. He entered upon his duties of office in July but did not take the oaths required by the charter until the following September, the day before the annual commencement.

Henry Stirling was now a senior. He had not particularly distinguished himself in his studies during his college course, except in fits and starts. When he tried he did good work, but he did not always try. Each winter he had applied himself to his studies seriously, but with the coming of spring his enthusiasm invariably waned. One thing had happened to him, however, that he had not considered pos-

sible, and that was a feeling of friendship for one of the faculty. Mr. Jeremiah Halsey, the senior tutor, had taken a personal interest in Henry when he first began to teach at the college two years previously. He had gone out of his way to cultivate the young boy's friendship and gain his confidence, and gradually he had succeeded. He was a man who had not forgotten that he was once young himself, he understood young men and saw things from their point of view. Henry, as time went on, felt himself drawn to Mr. Halsey, more and more; he worked for him and tried hard to please him. He still had misunderstandings with the other members of the faculty, however, and though it did not occur as frequently as during his earlier residence at Nassau Hall, occasionally he still found himself in trouble for breaking some one of the numerous rules and regulations. Mr. Baldridge, the steward, still maintained his attitude of hostility, and this did not tend to make things any easier.

The steward himself did not find life altogether pleasant. The meals he served were the cause of frequent and insistent complaints, and such was his nature that he always held it

against the boy who complained and tried to get him into difficulties with the faculty.

"He's an old skinflint," exclaimed George Dodd, one day shortly after President Davies had taken his oath of office. "You know what will happen as a result of the new ruling of the trustees, don't you?"

"What ruling?" asked John Ayres, one of the group lying under the trees in front of Nassau Hall, discussing the food served them; one of their favorite topics of conversation, by the way.

"Haven't you heard?" demanded George. "Why the trustees are not going to pay Baldridge a regular salary any more, but are to allow him twenty shillings a year for each person who boards here; the result will be poorer food than ever, though that may scarcely seem possible."

"Why so?" asked Samuel Pierson. "Does that follow necessarily?"

George looked at him pityingly. "Sam," he said, "sometimes I feel completely discouraged about you. You seem so stupid, though you really aren't any more so than the average I suppose."

Samuel merely grinned.

"The point is this," said George. "If old Baldridge gets twenty shillings a year from every person he feeds and if he spends the whole twenty shillings he won't have anything left for himself, will he? On the other hand if he only spends fifteen shillings on each person he will have something left. The less he spends for food the more he'll make. Is that plain?"

"In other words," said John, "he will try to make as much as he can for himself and the way he'll do it will be by cutting down on the quantity and quality of the food he gets for us."

"Exactly so," exclaimed George. "Mark my words, the rations served us from now on will be unfit for human consumption."

"Then we'll fix up something for Mr. Baldridge," said Henry, who had been lying on his back gazing up into the tree tops. "He doesn't love me the least little bit, and I must say I don't waste a great amount of affection on him. A chance to get even for a few of the things he has done to me would be very welcome, and not altogether unpleasant."

"What's your idea?" demanded John.

"That will become known to a chosen few later on," said Henry, "all depending on whether the occasion arises for its employment."

"Sounds mysterious," said George. "Don't forget that I am included in any enterprise having as its object getting even with Baldridge for the stuff he has served us in the guise of food during the past three years. My digestion is permanently ruined I fear, and he alone is to blame."

George's prediction about the food proved to be correct. The new arrangement had scarcely gone into effect when the students began to complain more strenuously than ever before. At one meal they arose from the tables and walked out of the room in a body, refusing to taste the meal set before them. President Davies immediately called a meeting of the whole student body and delivered a lecture on the subject, warning them that a repetition of such action would meet with severe punishment. He was fair-minded, however, and also warned Mr. Baldridge that it was incumbent upon him to see to it that the food supplied in the future should be of a quality which should satisfy the

students. For a time it was better, but the improvement was short-lived and within a very few days grumbling again was heard and complaints were frequent.

"It's about time to put your idea into effect, isn't it?" George Dodd asked of Henry, coming into his room one evening.

Henry put down a textbook on Natural Science he was reading. "I think it is," said he. "And there is no time like the present."

CHAPTER XV

IN THE BUTTERY

John Ayres was in the room with Henry and George when they made up their minds to seek revenge on Mr. Baldridge. John naturally was of a quiet and serious disposition, and but little inclined to the pranks and escapades of so many of the students. In common with the other boys he had his grievances against the steward, however, and was not unwilling to be a party to any scheme which would serve to make things unpleasant for that individual.

"What are you planning to do, Henry?" he asked.

"I'll tell you my idea in a minute," said Henry. "Let's get Hugh Harris first and see if he won't join the expedition. Four would be the right number."

He stepped out into the hallway, and ran full into Mr. Baldridge who had just come around the corner at that moment.

"I beg your pardon, sir," exclaimed Henry, backing away in great confusion.

"You ran into me purposely," said Mr. Baldridge angrily.

"I assure you, sir, I did not," said Henry earnestly. "I had no idea you were anywhere about."

"I don't believe you," exclaimed Mr. Baldridge warmly. "You never did have any manners."

Henry bit his lip and said nothing. Mr. Baldridge looked at him angrily, snorted and walked on down the hall. Henry waited until he had passed out of sight, then he followed him as far as the room which Hugh Harris still occupied alone. When he returned to his own room, accompanied by Hugh, George and John were deriving much pleasure from the recent collision.

"I believe myself you did it on purpose," said George.

"I'd like to run into him full force sometime," said Henry grimly. "The old jay bird. I never knew there was a man in the world who had it in him to infuriate me so."

"Too bad you didn't knock him down,"

laughed Hugh. "What's this you are planning to do to him to-night?"

"Shut the door, will you, John?" asked Henry. "We don't want to run any chance of being overheard."

"Baldridge's coming down the hall now," said John a moment later, returning from the doorway to his seat on the side of the bed. The boys kept silent until the footsteps died away in the distance.

"Tell us what your scheme is," urged George.

"Why it isn't very much of a scheme," said Henry. "It was just something that occurred to me might furnish us some fun and make Mr. Baldridge awfully angry."

"That's a good start," exclaimed George eagerly. "Go on."

"Any friends of the steward present?" asked Henry.

"Not here or anywhere near here," said Hugh quickly.

"Well," said Henry, "it has always seemed to me that the things which make Mr. Baldridge more angry than anything else are those which make him appear ridiculous. Remember the

time about two years ago when he slipped and fell on the floor? And I laughed so I couldn't stop? I firmly believe that was the thing which first made him really dislike me, and he has never got over it. My idea now is that if we can prick that puffed up vanity of his and make him appear silly before the whole college we can get revenge for all those terrible meals better than in any other way."

"No doubt of it," said George.

"And to-night's the time to do it," Henry said. "The sooner the better."

"Just a moment," said John. "Here's a point I don't think you have considered, Henry. You know Mr. Baldridge dislikes you, and isn't he liable to suspect you of being the instigator of whatever is done? Particularly after your running into him in the hallway just a few moments ago? Of course this is only a suggestion and it may not be worth considering because I don't know the nature of your idea. But this thought occurred to me, and it wouldn't do for you to be caught in any escapade just now."

"True enough," said Henry. "I've thought of that too, but here's my plan. Suppose we should get into the pantry, and help ourselves

to some of Baldridge's supply of butter, or what he calls butter. Suppose we took about one hundred and fifty pounds of it, carried it outside, and carved the figure of a man out of it, then hung a sign on it to the effect that it was the steward in effigy. Do you think Baldridge would be annoyed or flattered?"

"He'd be so mad he would probably blow up," exclaimed Hugh gleefully. "It's a wonderful scheme, Henry. I can write a poem too if you'd like."

"But he'd suspect you, Henry," John objected.

"Of course he would," Henry agreed. "For that reason I think I had better not participate, so when the row starts I can say I was not present. I hate to be out of it, but I really think I had better confine my participation in the matter to furnishing the idea."

"That's right," said George. "We can do the actual work."

"Play is a better term for it," said Hugh.

"What time is it?" asked John.

Henry consulted his watch. "It lacks just ten minutes of nine o'clock."

"You'd better go to your rooms," said John,

addressing Hugh and George. "We certainly can't start before the nine o'clock bell and it would probably be safer if we waited for an hour after that. We must give every one a chance to get well asleep."

"Suppose we come back at ten or shortly after ten," said George.

"How are we going to the buttery?" asked Hugh. "Certainly not by way of the main hallway and the stairs?"

"I suggest that you use my rope and go down the outside of the building," said Henry. "It's the easiest way."

"Good," George exclaimed. "We'll be back at ten o'clock."

"And be quiet," whispered John as the two boys left the room.

"Henry," he said when they had gone, "this is going to cause a scandal in the college which will mean dismissal for the ones responsible."

"If they are discovered," said Henry.

"That's true, of course."

The nine o'clock bell commenced to ring a moment later, and it became necessary to blow out the candles and leave the room in darkness until the tutor had made his round of inspec-

tion. When he had gone the two boys crept to the door and hung a blanket over it so that no light could penetrate the crevices; they hung another blanket over the window, and then lighted a candle. They accomplished all this with despatch and quiet, it being a common practice of theirs. Several times too they had had parties in their rooms which had lasted far into the night, some of the guests had not been students, but friends of Henry in the town, who had arrived by way of the window and the rope.

The first thing Henry did this night was to take his rope out from under the mattress and attach it firmly to one leg of the bed, and coil the rest of it on the floor where it would be convenient to the window. Then he and John lay on the bed and conversed in low tones about the expedition they had planned. The idea of carving Mr. Baldridge in effigy and using butter for the purpose appealed strongly to John. A dozen times he felt in his pocket to make certain his knife was there so that he could do his full share of the work.

"We've got to make a sign for the statue," exclaimed Henry suddenly, and sprang out of bed. "You're not such good sculptors that

many people will be able to recognize the figure you make as representing Old Baldridge unless you hang a sign on it, with his name printed on it."

"Let me do that," said John. "You mustn't do a single thing."

"All right," laughed Henry, and handed the quill pen and a sheet of white paper over to his roommate.

John dipped the quill into the ink bottle and printed on the piece of paper "SIMIAN BALDRIDGE." He handed it to Henry for his inspection. Henry looked at it and then had to bury his face in the pillow to keep from laughing aloud.

"John," he exclaimed, "you have a truly wonderful mind. Who but you could have thought of spelling his first name that way instead of E-O-N? Now I am sure he will burst with rage. To be carved in effigy is bad enough, but to be described as a monkey in addition will give him apoplexy."

"I hope no one will discover who did the deed," said John.

"Don't worry about that for a moment," said Henry confidently. "Why the whole college is

complaining of the food and there is no reason why any one of the students shouldn't be suspected. No one will suspect you, John, I am sure; you are such a model student."

"I do try to work and make the most of my opportunities," said John simply.

"It makes me feel guilty to hear you say that," said Henry. "I am such a loafer and a good-for-nothing myself."

He took out his watch and consulted it by the light of the candle. Simultaneously there came a scratching at the door. "Who is it?" John whispered cautiously from within the room.

"It is I," replied the voice of George Dodd.

John opened the door quietly, and George stepped in followed by Thomas Spencer. "Why, Thomas," exclaimed John after he had closed the door behind them. "What are you doing here?"

"I met George as he was leaving your room just before nine o'clock," said George, "and I could tell by the expression on his face that some mischief was brewing. I persuaded him to tell me what it was, and learning that the party was originally planned to consist of four,

I thought perhaps I could take Henry's place and join the expedition."

"You won't say anything about it, will you?" asked John anxiously.

Thomas laughed. "You don't think I'd tell on myself, do you?" he demanded. "Of course I don't want to force myself on you though if you think I had better not come along."

"We want you to come," said John. "Where's Hugh I wonder?"

Hugh appeared presently and plans for their procedure were hastily made. The candle was extinguished, the window opened, and the rope let down the outside of the building. Then the four boys who were to make the raid on the buttery removed their shoes, so as to make as little noise as possible. John thrust his head out of the window to see if the way was clear and observing that the building was in complete darkness, decided it was safe to go ahead. He swung himself out of the window and clutching the knotted rope in both hands began to lower himself to the ground. Thomas followed, then George, then Hugh. Henry leaned on the sill and strained his eyes to see what they were doing. All he could make out was a dark blot on

the ground, and presently it moved away and was absorbed in the shadows.

Hugh led the way, and came first to the window opening into the buttery. It was raised for ventilation as usual, and he had no trouble in climbing through it. His three companions followed close behind, and once safely inside they stood and listened for several moments to be certain that no one was moving about who might discover their presence. Complete quiet reigned and they were encouraged to feel their way forward once more. They moved with extreme caution doing their utmost to make no sound.

"Do you know where he keeps the butter?" whispered John.

"I do," said Hugh. "In a hogshead behind the door, just ahead."

He stumbled over a chair in the darkness and the scrape of the legs on the stone floor seemed to the boys the loudest sound they had ever heard. For several minutes they scarcely dared to breathe while they strained their ears for any sign that the noise had aroused any one. Reassured at length by the unbroken stillness, they crept on again.

"Here it is," whispered Hugh presently. "This is the hogshead."

"Is the door open?" George inquired.

Thomas discovered that it was not barred and could be opened at their pleasure. "We had better bolt it, and do our work inside I think," he whispered. "Then when we are all finished we can carry the image upstairs and place it in the main hall."

"Meanwhile we must have a light," said Hugh. "Let's hope there are some live coals in the stove." This proved to be the case and a moment later two candles, brought along in John's pockets, were lighted and placed on the floor. The light they shed was faint and flickering, but it was sufficient.

The top was removed from the hogshead and with their knives the boys cut out great squares of butter and placed them side by side on the floor. Everything had been arranged in advance; Hugh was to make the head and the neck. Thomas the legs, John the arms and George the body. Each boy set to work with a will. The butter was soft enough to permit of its being molded without difficulty, and it did not require many moments for each boy to com-

plete his particular part of the task, for no thought of anything but a rough model of a man was contemplated.

"Shall we put him together here?" chuckled George.

"No," said Hugh, "let's each carry his part upstairs and we'll join them up there."

He opened the door and carrying the head of the yellow statue under one arm stepped out into the hallway. "Better bring a candle, John," he whispered, turning around. "We'll need it getting up the stairs."

"I can't carry a candle," said John. "My hands are full of arms."

George began to giggle at this and had considerable difficulty in getting control of himself. Meanwhile his companions muttered imprecations, threatening him with torture and death if he should be the cause of their being discovered.

Hugh took one of the candles when George's mirth had finally subsided, and led the way through the dark passageway to the stairs. He mounted slowly, his companions following in single file, stocking-footed. They came to the top of the stairs, and halted by the door, lis-

tening for any suspicious sound. Hearing nothing, Hugh pushed the door open cautiously and stepped out into the hallway. On tip-toe they skulked along the dark deserted passage and presently came to the main entrance hall, directly back of which was situated the dining hall and refectory.

"Stretch him out on the table," whispered Hugh. "On his back."

A long table was placed against the wall on one side, and a moment later George had laid the body of the image there. Each one of the other boys stepped up in turn and joined his part of the statue to the torso. Hugh held the candle so that they could see what they were doing and when the work was completed the four boys ranged themselves alongside the table to admire their handiwork. Then John drew from under his jacket the sign he had printed and placed it on the table in back of the yellow figure, leaning it against the wall.

" 'Simian Baldridge,' " George read. "He'll certainly be mad."

"Let us hope so," chuckled Hugh. "Here's my contribution."

He took a slip of paper from his pocket.

Through two holes in it he had thrust a thin stick of wood so that it was held rigidly in place. He stuck one end of the stick into the stomach of the image and the paper stood up like the sail of a square-rigged ship.

"What's on it?" demanded George.

"It's a poem," said Hugh. "Read it."

He held the candle close to the piece of paper, and the three other boys leaned over eagerly to read the verse Hugh had composed. John read aloud:

"Oh Baldridge was a steward
At the College of N. J.
Who served the students greasy food
At each meal every day.
He gave them fat, but never lean,
Till one night if you please
He just turned into butter
And here he lies in grease."

"Poor poetry," said George, "but the sentiments are excellent."

"You can't expect any poet to turn out a finished piece in a half-hour," said Hugh, somewhat offended.

"Of course not," said George, "and I didn't mean any criticism. It's splendid."

"And combined with John's sign ought to serve our purpose, don't you think?" said Hugh.

"No question about it," chuckled George. "Now if everything has been done hadn't we better leave as quickly as we can?"

They stole a last look at the crude yellow figure stretched out on the table, and with Hugh leading, candle in hand, began to retrace their steps the way they had come. In silence they crept down the stairs, through the buttery, and then out through the window. Not until they stood on solid ground outside the building did they breathe freely, and even then they realized that the danger of discovery was not past by any means. They still were obliged to scale the side of Nassau Hall and climbing up a rope at night is not the easiest thing in the world to do even if the rope has big knots tied in it every few feet.

Henry had been watching for their return for a long time, and was becoming worried at their continued absence. He was immensely relieved therefore when by the faint light of the stars he discovered his four friends skulking along towards him. He let the rope down again, for

he had pulled it in while his friends were away, and after a short wait Hugh's smiling face appeared in the window. At least it turned out to be Hugh's, for Henry had extinguished the light and could not see anything clearly. He helped Hugh enter, and John and George followed soon after. Thomas had elected to be the last one of the four to climb the rope. Henry, peering out the window, saw him start a moment later.

Then an unexpected thing happened.

CHAPTER XVI

THE YELLOW STATUE

There came a sudden crash of falling glass. The four boys gathered in the room on the second floor of Nassau Hall had been whispering and laughing delightedly over the success of their exploit, and when they heard this noise their hearts almost stopped beating. They crowded to the window each one trying to discover its cause, but the casement was narrow and Henry and George being the first to act were the only ones who could see.

"What's the matter?" demanded Hugh excitedly.

"Ssh," hissed Henry, turning around. "Tom kicked a pane out of the window below. Hugh, you and George get back to your rooms just as fast as you can go. Don't argue," he insisted as they started to protest. "Hurry!"

He pushed them towards the door, then returned to the window to see what he could do to help Thomas. That individual's head was

just appearing over the sill. Henry grasped him by the shoulders and dragged him into the room.

"Are you hurt?" he demanded.

"No, but I'm angry with myself," gasped Thomas.

"Forget about that," said Henry. "Run for your room as fast as you can. John, haul up that rope."

John had not waited to be told about this. He already had the rope piled on the floor and was untying the end of it which was fastened to the leg of the bedstead. Henry shoved Thomas through the doorway into the hall and shut the door behind him.

"Here, John," he whispered excitedly, "stick the rope under the mattress, take your clothes off as fast as you can and get into bed." These various things were done in an extraordinarily short time. Scarcely two minutes had elapsed from the time of Thomas's entrance through the window until the roommates were in bed and under the covers. Neither of them spoke. They were listening for sounds of people moving about. All seemed quiet on the second floor, but from below came the faint

sound of footsteps and a window being closed.

"Do you think Thomas, and George and Hugh got back to their rooms safely?" whispered John finally.

"I think so," said Henry. "I certainly trust so."

"It's bad business," said John, "and will make trouble for some one. Do you suppose we shall be suspected of having a rope?"

"We'll get it out of here the first thing in the morning. Then if the rooms are searched they won't find anything here."

"So clumsy of Thomas," said John. "Who lives in the room underneath?"

"Mr. Halsey."

"One of the faculty," groaned John. "We'll be suspected sure."

"Listen," said Henry.

Some one was walking along the hall. The two boys lay in bed, scarcely breathing, waiting to learn the destination of the person approaching. If they had only known it three other boys were also wide awake listening with equal attention to the same sounds. The footsteps on the stone floor in the dead of night sounded unnaturally loud. To the listening boys they

seemed to shake the whole building, to crash and reëcho through the deserted corridors, and as they came nearer and nearer they felt as if they were heralding the approach of doom. Outside their door the footsteps halted, and John and Henry, lying in bed wide-eyed and tense, fully expected to hear a knock at their door and have one of the tutors enter. After a pause of what was probably only two or three seconds, but which seemed to the two boys to drag itself out into hours, the midnight walker moved on and presently the sound of his footsteps died away in the distance.

"Who was that, do you suppose?" whispered John.

"I have no idea. Baldridge, maybe."

"Probably," said John. "It would be just our luck too to have him find the statue down in the hall and remove it."

"That would be a calamity," said Henry. "Let's hope you're wrong."

"Well, whatever happens, one thing is sure," said John emphatically, "and that is that tomorrow is going to be a lively day around Nassau Hall—"

"That's an easy prophecy to make," said

Henry. "My only hope is that when the storm breaks we shall not be the center of it."

Luck was with them in one respect. Mr. Baldridge was slightly indisposed the following morning, and did not come downstairs at his customary time. Most mornings he was down a half-hour before breakfast, and if there had been no exception this particular day no doubt he would himself have discovered the image reclining on the table in the entrance hall and removed it before the students arrived on the scene. As it happened, however, he reached the entrance hall coincident with most of the students and there stretched out before the view of all was the figure carved in butter. The sign, "SIMIAN BALDRIDGE," resting against the wall behind it was plain to see and no one present could fail to grasp its significance.

Henry and John came down the stairs just behind Mr. Baldridge. They were not the first to arrive and a confused jumble of shouts, laughter and talk greeted their ears as they approached. Henry nudged his roommate.

"Good morning, Mr. Baldridge," he said pleasantly.

The steward swung around. "Good morning," he said shortly.

Then the noise in the entrance hall grew louder, and Mr. Baldridge, muttering something under his breath, hurried ahead. Pandemonium reigned.

George Dodd was standing at the head of the statue, holding in one hand the poem Hugh had written, using the other for spectacular gestures. As the steward, John and Henry entered, he was just finishing.

> "He just turned into butter
> And here he lies in grease,"

they heard him read.

Shouts of applause greeted the verse, and then suddenly there was quiet as the subject of the poem entered the room. The students fell back from the table, as Mr. Baldridge strode forward. He walked up the aisle formed by the separated groups of boys, straight to the yellow statue. For a tense moment he stood in silence and looked at it. Then he reached over, seized the sign John had printed, tore it into small pieces, threw them on the floor and wheeled to face the assemblage gathered there

watching him. His face was blanched, his lips drawn close across his teeth and his hands worked convulsively. He opened his mouth to speak, but no sound issued forth. He swallowed hard, and then suddenly he got control of himself.

"Go into breakfast," he snapped, and stamped his foot angrily.

Without a word the students turned and filed into the dining room. They sat down at the tables in silence, and not a word was spoken for some moments. No one seemed to want to take the responsibility of saying the first word. Then George Dodd, always an adventurous spirit, looked at Hugh Harris, who was seated opposite him at the table.

"The bacon is not quite as fat as usual this morning, is it?" he asked, his face a mask and his tone entirely conversational.

Laughter filled the room immediately and a buzz of talk took the place of the previous silence. Mr. Baldridge had not come into breakfast as was his wont, but a few moments later President Davies appeared. The students all rose from their seats and stood respectfully as he entered. He paused in the doorway and

glanced about the room. Then he held up his hand. His face was serious and stern.

"Young gentlemen," he said, "I have just been informed of the unfortunate occurrence of this morning. I need not say, I am sure, that such a breach of courtesy on the part of the student body towards one of the members of the faculty gives me great pain and distress. I am chagrined to think that any of my students should be so lacking in respect that they should be guilty of an offense against good manners so gross and so serious as the one just brought to my attention. It gives me the deepest concern and I warn the offenders that everything will be done to discover their identity and fix the blame where it belongs. Further,—but this should not be construed as in any way excusing them,—I shall myself take up the matter of food served here and if it can be improved in quality I shall use my best efforts to bring about an improvement."

He turned and left the room without another word. The students resumed their seats and finished their meal.

"Whoever did it deserves a vote of thanks from the students if the result is more palat-

able food," said George Dodd to Samuel Pierson who was seated on his right.

"Martyrs in a good cause," said Samuel, who, by the way, knew perfectly well the identity of those who were responsible.

This seemed to be the general sentiment, and every one in the room felt that he owed a personal debt of gratitude to whoever it was that had planned and carried into execution the carving and placing of the statue, and the preparation of the sign and the verse.

The meal over, the students scattered to their rooms to discuss the event in detail, laugh about it and rejoice over the humiliation of the pompous steward and the prospect of better meals to come.

"It couldn't have worked out better if it had been rehearsed," said Henry when he and John had reached their room on the second floor. "The whole setting was perfect, just like a scene from a play."

"I felt kind of sorry for Baldridge," said John, gazing out of the window.

"Sorry for Baldridge?" echoed Henry. "Don't be ridiculous. He deserved it all, every bit of it, and if he were honest I'll wager he'd

admit it himself. And what's more, I believe President Davies knows he deserved it."

"If he finds out who did it he'll have them punished just as severely though. I'd hate to be expelled my senior year."

"Don't be so gloomy," laughed Henry. "And what's more, stop worrying. If the ones who did it are discovered they'll be punished of course. The authorities will have to do something to them for the sake of appearances. But there's no more chance of their being expelled than there is of my being the faculty's favorite student."

"You think so?"

"I'm sure of it."

"What about the broken window in Hr. Halsey's room?"

"Which reminds me," exclaimed Henry, "that the rope is still under the mattress. We ought to get it out of here."

"I'll take it over to Thomas's room," said John.

A moment later, the rope under his jacket, he had crossed the hallway and the door of the room occupied by Samuel and Thomas closed behind him. Henry sat down by the window,

ostensibly to go over the arithmetic lesson set for that day, but in reality to think about the events of the morning and the preceding night.

He honestly believed that there was really slight danger of any serious punishment being meted out to the offenders, in case it were established who they were. The poor quality of the food furnished by Mr. Baldridge was a matter of common knowledge, not only among the students and faculty, but even the trustees of the college. At times it had almost reached the proportions of a scandal, and Henry felt that the authorities would consider the students more or less justified in taking matters into their own hands. He was sure, too, that the immediate object of the whole undertaking,—the obtaining of better food,—would be obtained. He wished he had personally been able to participate in the making of the statue. He had wanted, too, an opportunity to examine it more closely than he had been able to do. When the students had come out from breakfast it had been removed, and before breakfast, during the scene when Mr. Baldridge had discovered himself carved in effigy, he had had only the most casual glance at it. But he could not

deny that on the whole the undertaking had been an unqualified success.

Then he thought of the broken window below. Therein lay possibilities of serious complications he feared. Of course some one might imagine that the students who had carved the statue had thrown a stone through one of the professor's windows and the existence of the rope be unsuspected. But if a stone had been thrown it would have fallen in Mr. Halsey's room, and of course no such thing had happened.

"Perhaps it's only because we feel guilty that we think we may be connected with the broken window," he argued to himself. "Let's hope so anyway and trust to Mr. Halsey not to make a fuss. Meanwhile I'll have a look at it."

He went to the window and placing both hands on the sill leaned far out in an effort to get a view of the broken pane in the room beneath. The glass was set so deeply in the casement, however, that he could see nothing. He relinquished the effort and withdrew from the window. And at that moment there came a sharp knock at the door.

CHAPTER XVII

A TUTOR CALLS

"Come in," said Henry, turning the arithmetic book back up on the table.

The door opened and Mr. Halsey entered. He smiled a greeting, but his face was serious and there was a troubled look in his eyes.

"Good morning, sir," said Henry.

"Good morning, Henry," said Mr. Halsey.

"Won't you sit down, sir?" Henry pushed a chair forward.

"Thank you."

Mr. Halsey seated himself and remained silent for a few moments, gazing out the window and drumming with his fingers on the arm of the chair.

"Sit down, Henry," he said finally.

Henry was nervous. He knew that Mr. Halsey's call was surely connected with the previous night's escapade, and he did not relish the idea of being questioned about it. He sat on the edge of the bed, swinging his heels, waiting for

Mr. Halsey to reopen the conversation. He did not have long to wait, for presently the tutor turned and looked him straight in the eye.

"Henry," he said, "I like you."

This was the last thing Henry had expected him to say, and he was completely nonplussed. He blushed deeply, and for a moment was unable to think of anything to say in reply.

"Thank you, sir," he stammered finally.

"That is not what I have come here to talk about, however," Mr. Halsey went on slowly.

"Yes, sir," said Henry, thoroughly uncomfortable.

"Mr. Baldridge may have deserved what happened to him last night, or he may not. I don't want to discuss the merits of the case. Nor do I know who made the statue, or placed it in the hall. I'm not interested in that."

Henry began to get puzzled and wonder what it could be that Mr. Halsey did want. Not knowing did not make him any more comfortable.

"My point is this," Mr. Halsey continued. "You may not be aware of it, but when any prank is played by a student, or any mischief is afoot, the faculty are wont to suspect that a boy

named Henry Stirling is connected with it. This may be entirely unjust but it is a fact."

"Yes, sir," said Henry, not knowing what else to say.

"Do you know him?"

"Yes, sir," said Henry with a sheepish grin.

"Do you think there are any grounds for their suspecting him?"

"Of what happened last night, or of things in general?"

"Things in general."

"Sometimes," said Henry.

"I know him pretty well," said Mr. Halsey, "and I like him immensely. He is a boy who I think has great possibilities for good and I know the other students like him and look on him as their leader in many ways. Now I don't object to any one having a good time, and I like fun as well as the next man. It is possible, however, to think so much about having fun that the more serious things in life become neglected, and that isn't wise. What is more, such a course eventually makes fun impossible, because it leads to trouble. Do I sound as if I were preaching to you?"

"No, sir. What you say is true of course."

"I'm glad you agree with me. Now, I want to get your opinion and see if you won't say something to Henry Stirling; use your influence with him; he is a senior and will be ready to graduate inside of a year; he can make it a wonderful year if he will; he has brains and all he needs to do is to use them."

"He does like fun," said Henry slowly.

"There's no reason why he shouldn't have lots of it," said Mr. Halsey. "There is also no reason why he shouldn't rank with the best students in the college. If he did that I believe he'd appreciate his fun much more than he does now. Do you think I am right?"

Henry did not answer for some time. He was thinking of the various periods of his college career, comparing them and considering them from the standpoint of results obtained. He wondered when he had been happiest, when his mind and thoughts were concentrated on having a good time to the exclusion of all else, or when study had been his first consideration. He had had many good times and even had enjoyed breaking the college rules. This always meant uncomfortable moments, worriment, and sometimes remorse, while he could not deny that

knowledge of having done his work well and the feeling of having done his duty gave him a sense of satisfaction he did not get in any other way.

Mr. Halsey watched him, a half smile on his face.

"It's a real problem, isn't it?" he said.

"The correct answer is easy, but the hard part is carrying it out."

"Of course," laughed Mr. Halsey. "Most men know what they ought to do, but only the real men do it."

He rose to his feet. "I'm going back to my room now. I don't want you to promise me anything, because I think it's wrong to ask boys to make promises. I just hope you'll think a little bit about what I've said, and that you will try to make this last year of yours at Nassau Hall count for something worth while."

Henry took the outstretched hand of the tutor.

"You are very kind, Mr. Halsey," he said. "I shan't forget what you have said to me."

"That's all I want," said Mr. Halsey. "Come and see me when you have an opportunity. My room is right below yours you know."

"Yes, sir, I know that," said Henry, thinking of the broken window.

Mr. Halsey did not show by the expression of his face that he was thinking of any such thing, however. He smiled genially at Henry and moved towards the door. "I hope we shall get better acquainted," he said, and went out.

When he had gone Henry shut the door, and thrusting his hands into his pockets began to pace up and down the room, deep in thought. His thoughts were interrupted a few moments later, however, by the arrival of John and Thomas.

"We were just starting over here when we saw old Halsey at the door," said Thomas. "What was he snooping around here for?"

"He was not snooping," said Henry warmly. "And he is a fine man, and a good friend of mine."

Thomas sank limply into a chair. "John," he said, "would you mind pinching me? I think I must be asleep, for it seemed to me I heard Henry say that a member of the faculty is a good friend of his. I certainly am dreaming."

"Don't be silly," said John. "What did he

want, Henry? Did he ask you what you knew of the Baldridge affair? Lucky we had removed the rope before he came, wasn't it?"

"The only mention he made of the Baldridge affair was to say he was not interested in it, and didn't care who had carved the figure."

"I guess he must have stopped in to ask Henry about some particularly difficult translation from the Greek," said Thomas with a wink at John.

Henry ignored this remark. Mr. Halsey's few words had made a deep impression on him and he was in no mood for joking. He told the two other boys just what he and the tutor had talked about.

"I am convinced he suspects that I was involved in the Baldridge escapade," he said, "but he wouldn't tell on me or any one else if he possibly could help it. I'm equally convinced of that."

"Do you suppose he suspects you of smashing his window?" asked Thomas, now thoroughly serious and also impressed by what Mr. Halsey had said, as reported by Henry.

"I don't know at all," said Henry. "I really don't care. "What I do care about though is

his opinion of me in the future. I'm going to turn over a new leaf."

"No more stealing out at night?" asked Thomas. "No more visits to the taverns? No more secret feasts in this room after hours?"

Henry had been standing in front of the window during this conversation, his back to the occupants of the room. As Thomas finished speaking, however, he suddenly wheeled about and clasped his temples in both hands.

"Great heavens," he exclaimed.

"What's the matter, Henry?" John demanded.

"Oh nothing much," said Henry casually, "except that I have planned for a party here this very evening."

"Cancel it," said John.

"I can't. I've invited two outsiders."

"Who are to arrive by way of the rope and the window, I suppose?"

"Exactly."

"Can't you send them word?"

"It's impossible. I don't know where to reach them."

"Well, if you don't mind my saying so," said Thomas, "I think you're very foolish to try to

have a party here to-night. The faculty will be on the lookout for any infractions of the rules after what was done to Baldridge. Mr. Halsey was extremely decent about his window last night, but he may not be so pleased if anything happens to-night."

"I know it," said Henry gloomily, "but what can I do?"

"Who's coming?" asked John.

"Jason Work for one."

"Your soldier friend?"

"Yes. Roger Brown is another."

"Any students?"

"I expected you and Thomas of course. Also Hugh, George and Samuel."

"You'd better cancel it," urged Thomas seriously. "It is a big risk. Old Baldridge will be pacing around the building all night long just waiting for a chance to find somebody breaking the rules. If he should catch you you know what would happen."

"Of course I know," said Henry. "It's most unfortunate. I've got cider, too, and pastry, tobacco, pipes and rum. It has cost me quite a penny to get ready for it. Even so I'd give it up if I thought I could notify Work and

Brown. But Jason I know was riding to Freehold this morning and will not return till evening. Besides it would be extremely impolite to recall the invitation."

"He would understand," said John.

"I think I'll go through with it," said Henry.

"What would Mr. Halsey think of you?"

"That's the hard part," Henry admitted. "I gave him to understand that from now on I was going to be a model student and I should hate to have him look on me as a hypocrite."

"Cancel it then," urged John.

Henry was silent for a time. "I can't," he said finally. "I really don't see how I can. I appreciate the risks, the risk of getting into trouble with the authorities and the risk of losing Mr. Halsey's good opinion. But I'm going to run those risks just the same. I feel that I must and that is all there is to it."

Thomas and John knew his mind was made up. They had seen Henry decide things before and they knew from the tone of his voice that there was not the slightest advantage to be gained from arguing with him.

"I'm sorry," said John with a sigh. "I think you're making a mistake."

"No doubt."

Henry shrugged his shoulders and turned away. So far as he was concerned the discussion was closed. He seated himself by the window, picked up his arithmetic book from the table and opened it to the assignment for that day. A moment later he was deeply engrossed in it, and so far as could be judged from appearances was unconscious that his two friends were in the room with him.

John and Thomas exchanged glances.

"I must go," said Thomas. "I promised to help Sam with his Greek."

"I'll come too if you don't mind," said John. "I didn't spend much time on to-day's lessons."

He followed Thomas to the door, and Henry looked up from his book.

"You've got my rope in your room, haven't you, Thomas?" he asked.

"Yes. John brought it over a little while ago."

"I'll stop in and get it some time to-day if you don't mind."

CHAPTER XVIII

AT THE WINDOW

The college buzzed with gossip all that day. Mr. Baldridge did not appear at dinner or at supper, but nevertheless he and the statue were the main topics of conversation. Speculation was rife as to who was responsible, but the participants guarded their identity well and no one really had anything more than a guess to offer.

Henry sat at the head of the table at dinner, it being his turn to carve. This was a task which each student performed in rotation, and a popular duty it was, because it gave the carver an opportunity to pay special attention to his own needs and save out choice morsels for himself. At any rate the carver was usually accused of this, whether he did it or not. George liked to explain such accusations by saying that the meat cut and served to the boys gathered around the table was so extremely bad that they could not help feeling that what the carver re-

served for himself must be an improvement. "It's so bad," he would say, "that anything different must be better."

Henry began that night to realize the truth of what Mr. Halsey had said to him earlier in the day about being suspected of having something to do with all the pranks played around the college. This suspicion evidently was not confined to the faculty either for it was easy for him to see that most of the students suspected him of being responsible for this latest escapade.

"How's the meat to-day, Henry?" some one would say. "Better than usual?"

"This is a delicious bit of meat you have given me, Henry," another would add. "I hope you're not depriving yourself, or is it all good to-day?"

"I wish Mr. Baldridge were here," a third would say with a sigh. "It's a shame for him to miss a delicious roast like this. How do you suppose it happened to be so good, Henry?"

"Perhaps Henry urged the steward to outdo himself in honor of its being his turn to carve," some one else would add, and wink at his neighbor across the table.

"You didn't do anything to Mr. Baldridge to make him consider an improvement in the food, did you, Henry?"

Questions like these were being addressed to him constantly, not always directly, but he knew for whom they were intended. In reply to all of them he merely smiled, never answering in words if he could avoid it. Once he caught Mr. Halsey's eye. The tutor was seated at the adjoining table, and as his glance met Henry's he solemnly winked one eye. Henry blushed, for he knew that Mr. Halsey's thoughts were the same as his and that the tutor recognized that the students all suspected him of complicity in the Baldridge affair. In fact, a majority of them probably looked upon him as the ringleader.

Another reason why Henry blushed was because of the party he had planned for that evening. He knew from the look on Mr. Halsey's face that the tutor trusted him, and he felt like a hypocrite. He realized that Mr. Halsey suspected him of participation in the previous night's escapade, but was too decent to tell on him. But he felt that his duty to the guests he had invited was paramount to all else, and

his mind was made up to risk the possible consequences.

"Henry is blushing," exclaimed one of the boys, noting the crimson flush on his face. "No doubt it is a blush of modesty."

"Why modesty?" demanded another.

"Because he hesitates to claim credit for the improvement in the food," the first one replied. A general laugh greeted these words, and Henry began to feel irritated. Jokes were all right, and he liked them even when they were at his own expense, but he was becoming weary of this one, and he wished they would talk about something else.

He must have showed his irritation in his face for some boy,—Henry did not know who,—announced to the table, "Henry's angry."

"No," said Henry, striving to speak calmly and slowly. "Not angry, just tired of such unoriginality."

This remark served as a check on the boys who had been doing most of the talking, and gradually the conversation drifted into other channels. The following day a portrait of His Majesty King George II was to be unveiled in the prayer hall and there was considerable ex-

citement over the preparations. President Davies was to deliver an address, Governor Bernard of the Jersey provinces, too, was to speak, and the whole day's ceremonies were to be made the occasion of elaborate manifestations of loyalty to the British Crown. As a matter of fact, Henry's original idea for his party that night had been a private celebration to precede the festivities of the following day in connection with the unveiling.

After dinner Henry retrieved his rope from Thomas's and Samuel's room and coiled it under the mattress in its accustomed place, convenient for use that evening. During the afternoon he smuggled in the food and drink he had purchased, stowed it away in the drawer of his desk and carefully locked the drawer.

"You'll get caught surely," said Hugh just before supper.

"Oh, Hugh, stop it," cried Henry. "I'm so sick and tired of having people say I'll get caught that I don't know what to do."

"Well I'll get caught, too," said Hugh, "for you asked me to the party you know, and of course I'm coming."

"I don't want you."

"Because you think I'm afraid of being caught. I know. But it takes more than that to keep me away from one of your parties."

"I don't want any of you to come," said Henry. "You all say you're coming, but it's because you want to prove that you are friends of mine. I don't need any such proof, and I excuse you. I should feel too badly if you got into trouble with the faculty on my account."

He turned on his heel and walked away. There was a note of sarcasm and bitterness in his tone and Hugh could not help but notice it. He stood and watched Henry for a moment, then ran into the building and hurried up to Thomas's room. There he found Thomas with George, John and Samuel all discussing Henry's party.

"Are you going?" demanded Hugh.

"Of course we're going," replied the others in chorus.

"Henry doesn't want us," said Hugh. "He just told me so. He thinks we're going just to prove our friendship."

"Nonsense," exclaimed Samuel.

"But that is what he thinks."

"Let him think so," said Samuel. "The fact remains, we're going."

So it happened that at nine o'clock that evening all these boys were gathered together in Henry's room. The food was spread out on the table, pipes and tobacco made ready, glasses arranged for the cider and rum.

"Lend a hand here, Thomas," said Hugh. "We might just as well barricade this door in case any tutor comes snooping around to find out what is taking place in here."

They wheeled the bed over in front of the door, hung a blanket over the cracks, turned the key and tied the door knob to the leg of the table. These were the precautions usually taken at such times, for the tutors did not hesitate to force a door open if the students failed to respond to their summons as quickly as they considered proper.

"Baldridge won't be around anyway," chuckled George. "Of course I'm awfully sorry he's sick, but at least it means that he won't bother us."

"Don't be so certain," said Hugh. "Old Baldridge would get out of a bed of sickness to

make trouble for a student. You know he would."

"But he won't be around to-night," George insisted. "He'll figure that no one will try anything so soon after last night. For that reason I think we are fairly safe."

"Well we can slide down the rope if any one does come," said John. "The door ought to hold long enough for us to escape."

"You don't want to escape, John," laughed Henry. "You and I belong in this room."

"John was thinking of us," said Samuel. "He's always extremely thoughtful of others."

"Exactly," said John with a laugh. "Henry, if you don't mind I'll light one of those pipes."

"Help yourself," said Henry. "Every one else do the same."

"What time are the other guests to arrive?" asked Hugh.

"Any minute now."

"How will you know when they get here?"

"The rope is out the window," said Henry. "When one of them arrives he will give it a tug, and I'll open the window wide enough for him to climb in. He'll then come up the rope and that is all there is to it."

Henry had scarcely finished speaking when there came a tug at the rope. He stepped to the window, raised the sash to the top and peered out. Standing close to the side of the building below he was able to distinguish the figure of a man.

"All right," he said in a low voice. "Come on up."

"It's probably Jason Work," he added, turning to the group in the room. "He has a reputation for promptness, and when there is food and drink involved he is usually ahead of time."

The rope swayed back and forth as the climber grasped each succeeding knot and pulled himself up.

"My, he's slow," said Thomas. "I'll warrant it didn't take me half so long to climb that rope last night."

"Jason is not kicking out window panes on the way up though," said Hugh with a sly wink at his companions. "It's better to be slow if that means the building is not going to be damaged."

"You have me there," said Thomas with a laugh. "Here he is anyway."

A hand gripped the window sill, then the top of a man's cap appeared and a moment later it was followed by a face.

Not the face the boys had expected to see, however.

As they recognized who it was that was looking at them over the window sill their jaws dropped in astonishment, they started back and stood staring helplessly. Not a word was spoken. Six boys stood open-mouthed, staring at what seemed to them must be an apparition. Then a leer spread across the face at the window and the eyes shone evilly.

"Ha, ha," said the well-known voice of Simeon Baldridge.

CHAPTER XIX

AN UNUSUAL CONVERSATION

No one moved. No one spoke. Every one of the boys seemed frozen to the floor and his tongue to have been smitten with paralysis. They stood and stared stupidly at the leering face at the window, a face on which unholy glee was mingled with the look of revenge. The oily black hair, the eyes too close together, the thin and slightly hooked nose, the mouth covered by thin lips which drooped downward at the corners,—all seemed to unite in depicting a spirit of vindictive pleasure. The eyes were fixed on Henry, then they fastened themselves on each one of the group in turn, returning again to Henry and remaining there.

"Ha, ha," he said again, and his lips curled and showed a faint line of teeth.

None of the boys spoke.

Once again the steward swept the group with his glance. Then he fixed his look on Henry as before.

"I've caught you this time, Henry Stirling," he snarled.

Henry did not stir. He made no offer to speak and the expression of his face did not change. The only visible sign he gave that he was aware of the situation at all was that his face was pale, and his hands trembled.

"You leave college to-morrow," snapped Mr. Baldridge.

Then he turned his head and looked down, evidently preparing to descend. It was at that moment that Henry regained control of his muscles and his mental processes. He pointed a finger at the steward.

"Stop!" he ordered sharply.

Mr. Baldridge looked at him in surprise. So did the boys who were gathered there for the party. Henry's jaw was set squarely and there was a hard glint in his eyes. It was easy to see he was deadly serious and meant business.

"Perhaps you didn't hear me," said Mr. Baldridge, with infinite sarcasm. "I said that you will leave college to-morrow. This time it will not be any matter of two weeks, but for good and all."

Again he made as if to descend.

"Stop, I said," Henry repeated. There was something in the tone of his voice that startled the steward and he stared at Henry in astonishment.

"To whom are you speaking?" he demanded.

"To you," said Henry. "Don't you try to climb down that rope."

Mr. Baldridge became so angry at this that he almost lost his grip and fell down. He spluttered with rage, unable to formulate words for a moment.

"You insolent puppy," he cried finally. "How dare you? How dare you speak to me in such a manner?"

"Listen, you Baldridge," said Henry calmly. "You've been trying to get me in trouble ever since I came to the College of New Jersey, and now you think you've caught me at last, do you?"

"I know it," said the steward. "You will leave college to-morrow."

His tone was not quite so positive as it had been, however, for there was something in Henry's manner that plainly worried him.

"I will not leave college to-morrow," said Henry.

"I say you will," exclaimed Mr. Baldridge hotly.

The five boys who witnessed this altercation were at a loss to understand what was transpiring. The incongruity of the thing did not appeal to them as it might have done were the situation less serious,—one of the college authorities hanging over the window sill at half past nine at night, his feet and legs dangling outside, while he was openly defied by a student. Every one of them had an idea that Henry had suddenly gone mad, for how else could his conduct be explained? Unless, of course, he had made up his mind that he was to be expelled no matter what happened, and so he might as well have the satisfaction of telling his arch enemy in what low esteem he held him.

"I will not leave college to-morrow," Henry repeated, "nor at any other time because of anything you may do or say."

"That may be your opinion," said Mr. Baldridge, "but the fact remains as I have stated it. There is no need of our discussing it further. Gentlemen,"—he swept the other occupants of the room with his glance,—"I bid you good night."

"Just a minute, Simeon," exclaimed Henry.

His calling the steward by his Christian name gave his friends a distinct shock and they were puzzled to detect that his voice now contained a note of amusement.

Mr. Baldridge stopped short and turned again to Henry, purple with rage. Henry had taken his pocket knife from his jacket and opened the largest blade. He whetted it idly on his thumb.

"Simeon," he said, "if you make another move to leave your graceful position there on the window sill, I'll cut the rope."

He enunciated the last four words slowly and distinctly, and as he heard them Mr. Baldridge started perceptibly. The expression of his face changed from one of anger to one of alarm.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"Exactly what I say," said Henry. "I want to have a little talk with you and I don't want you to leave until I've finished. You can see that I have a knife in my hand and I shall not hesitate to use it if the need arises."

"This is outrageous," spluttered the steward.

"Lots of things are outrageous," smiled Henry. "That's life."

"The kind of food you have been giving us is outrageous, for instance," exclaimed George, unable to keep out of the conversation any longer. He had suddenly realized that Henry held the whip hand, that Mr. Baldridge could be made to promise anything demanded of him, and he could not resist joining in the fun, for fun it now was.

"Yes, the kind of food you have been giving us is outrageous," Henry agreed. "First, we want to settle this other matter though."

Mr. Baldridge smiled a sickly smile.

"Do you think I'll leave college to-morrow?" asked Henry.

Mr. Baldridge said nothing.

"Because if you do I'll cut the rope immediately," Henry continued. "In other words, it's a case of my stopping or your dropping."

He seated himself on the floor cross legged and took hold of the rope with his left hand. The knife was in his other hand and he lightly sawed the blade back and forth across the rope. Mr. Baldridge clutched the window sill more tightly, and his eyes bulged. He hitched himself upward and made as if to climb into the room, but George was too quick for him. He

sprang to the window and pulled the sash down until it was within a foot of the sill and just enough space was left for the luckless steward's head to show through.

"That's the way, George," said Henry briefly.

"You'll suffer for this," muttered Mr. Baldridge.

"Take back those words or I cut the rope," said Henry sharply. He held the knife against the rope and looked at the pale-faced man in the window.

"Take them back?" he repeated.

The steward made no reply.

"One, two,—" Henry began to count.

"I take them back," cried Mr. Baldridge in alarm.

"Sure?"

"Yes."

"Say 'yes, sir,'" said Henry.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Baldridge meekly.

Hugh snickered audibly at this, and if a glance could kill, the one Mr. Baldridge shot at him would certainly have annihilated him.

"Order in the class-room," cried George, pointing his finger at Hugh. "Any further out-

breaks of this nature will be severely dealt with."

"Henry, this is the best party I ever attended," said Samuel. "I don't know how I can ever thank you for this wonderful evening."

"I am happy to hear that you are enjoying yourself," said Henry. "Still we must not slight our uninvited guest. He would never forgive us."

He turned to the window again.

"Excuse me, Simeon," he said. "I didn't mean to neglect you."

Mr. Baldridge said nothing, but the expression on his face spoke volumes.

"You're not going to report this little gathering, are you?" Henry asked.

The steward said nothing.

"Are you?" Henry repeated, waving his knife back and forth.

"No," said Mr. Baldridge after a moment's hesitation.

"Sir," said Henry.

"No, sir," said Mr. Baldridge.

"That's a promise?"

"Yes."

"Sir," said Henry.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Baldridge.

"I'm glad that's settled," said Henry with a sigh. "Now I'd like to ask you one or two questions before you leave. That is if you're not in a hurry."

"He looks very comfortable and happy where he is," said Hugh.

"Order in the class-room," cried George. "No talking there."

"Are you in a hurry?" asked Henry.

Mr. Baldridge hesitated.

"No," he said.

"Sir," said Henry.

"No, sir," said Mr. Baldridge.

"Do you eat the same food you serve us?" asked Henry.

"I do."

"Do you think it's fit to eat?"

"I eat it."

"Answer my question," said Henry. "The fact that you eat it proves little."

"I think it's fit to eat," said the steward.

"What curious ideas some people have," murmured Hugh.

"Order there," George exclaimed. "I said, no talking."

"I'm glad to get the steward's opinion of the food," said Henry. "I've been in doubt about it personally."

This remark drew a laugh from everybody present except Mr. Baldridge. From his expression it would not seem as if he saw anything funny about it at all.

"And now just one other thing before we say 'good night,' " said Henry. "I wish you would stop hounding me and spying on me. Of course I am devoted to you and would like to have you around all the time, but I don't think it's fair to the other students. They pay four pounds a year tuition just the same as I do, and it seems to me they are equally entitled to the pleasure of your company."

"Quite right, Henry," said Samuel.

"Order," cried George. "Mr. Stirling is in charge of this lecture, and it must be understood there are to be no interruptions."

"Yes, sir," said Samuel.

His use of the word "sir" drew a laugh from everybody present except the steward.

"I'm getting tired," he complained.

"We're tired of your food," said Henry.

"I shall try to improve it," said Mr. Baldridge.

John rose from the chair he was occupying. "Mr. Stirling," he said, "at the risk of causing an interruption it seems to me that that remark of the honorable steward calls for three cheers."

"I quite agree," said Henry. "But the hour is late and we might disturb the slumbers of the faculty."

"True," said John solemnly. "I withdraw my suggestion." He sat down again.

"Our guest is tired," said Henry. "He wants to retire so as to be up bright and early in the morning, clear-headed and able to give his best attention to the improvement of the students' fare. We had better bid him good night I think."

At that moment there was a violent tug at the rope and the unfortunate steward nearly lost his grip. He clutched madly at the window sill, and barely saved himself from falling. Henry sprang to the window, threw open the sash and peered out.

"That you, Jason?" he inquired cautiously.

"Yes," said a voice from below. "I want to come up."

"Somebody is coming down first," said Henry. "Wait a moment."

"You'd better go," he announced to Mr. Baldridge. "It has been a great pleasure to us to have you here and I hope you'll never come again. You won't forget your promise, will you?"

"No," said Mr. Baldridge.

"Sir," said Henry.

"No, sir," said Mr. Baldridge, and began to descend the rope.

CHAPTER XX

DOWN PRETTY BROOK

When Mr. Baldridge reached the ground he scurried away as fast as he could; he paid no attention to the two soldiers who were standing at the end of the rope and made no offer to return their greeting. Henry followed the steward down the rope and explained to his two invited guests what had taken place. They were highly amused at the recital, but refused, under the circumstances, to consider partaking of the food and drink Henry had made ready in his room.

" 'Tis too risky," said Roger. "We would only get you in trouble."

Henry protested, but to no avail. They insisted that it would not be fair for them to do anything which would jeopardize Henry's standing in the college, that they would rather know he was in Prince Town than to accept his hospitality, and possibly be responsible for his having to leave. Henry soon realized that there

was no use arguing with them about it, so he bade them good night, thanked them for this proof of their friendship and started to climb the rope to his room.

Long practice had made him expert and a moment later he was climbing over the window sill of the second floor room where he lived with John Ayres. To his surprise the room was dark and quiet.

"John," he called softly.

"Yes?" came a voice from the bed.

"Are you in bed? Where are the others?"

"I say, yes, to your first question. To the second, they've all returned to their rooms."

"But why?" demanded Henry irritably.

"Because we all decided we had done enough for one evening," said John, placidly. "There is no use in running unnecessary risks."

"What are the risks? Baldridge won't be around again to-night."

"Probably you're right about that," John admitted, "but I should hesitate to wager that he won't send some one else around."

"Rabbit-hearted, that's what you are," declared Henry, pulling in the rope and coiling it on his arm as he did so. Secretly, if the truth

were known, he was delighted that the necessity for his playing host had passed. He had done his part, stood by his invitations and he felt that his duty had been performed. Therefore, he was glad that the incident was closed. At least he hoped it was closed. As he stood in the dark room and removed his clothes he went over in his mind the events of the evening.

"You know, John," he said, "I feel rather guilty about the way I acted towards old Baldridge."

"Why?" asked John in surprise.

"I think I took advantage of him, and that's always unfair."

"You mean in making him promise not to tell?"

"No indeed," exclaimed Henry, "not in that. He certainly would have had me expelled if I hadn't threatened him, and I have no twinges of conscience on having got a promise out of him to keep his mouth shut."

"What are you feeling guilty about then?"

"Oh, for making him address me as 'sir' and that kind of thing. I can't help but feel that I took a mean advantage of him, that I didn't play the game quite fairly. Wasn't it like hav-

ing some one down and then jumping on him when he couldn't defend himself?"

"Henry," said John vehemently, "you're so upright you lean backwards. I never saw such a fellow for always worrying whether he had been fair or not, or whether he had done the sportsmanlike thing. Come to bed, you make me sick."

"No I don't either," laughed Henry.

"I shan't argue with you about that now," said John. "I'm too sleepy."

Henry saw Mr. Baldridge several times the following day. The steward spoke pleasantly to him on each occasion, more pleasantly in fact than he had ever done before. Henry did not place overmuch faith in this circumstance, however, for he did not feel at all certain that this changed attitude was either sincere or permanent. Of course it was possible that Mr. Baldridge had more respect for him than formerly because of the way he had asserted himself and spoken what he thought. But Henry did not feel at all confident of this, and resolved to be on his guard, and to do nothing which might lay him open to suspicion.

He was called upon to recite in Mr. Halsey's class that morning and failed miserably. A review of Longinus was being held and Henry had done no work in preparation because his time had been otherwise occupied the previous evening. Moreover neither Latin or Greek had ever been studies in which he was an adept, and the passage Mr. Halsey asked him to translate and explain was an exceptionally difficult one. This was not an excuse, however, and Henry knew that Mr. Halsey would not make any allowance for him because of that fact.

"He'll think I am a shirker and a liar," said Henry to Thomas, as they strolled along that part of the Kings Highway which ran through the village of Prince Town. They had just finished their noonday meal and were taking advantage of the two hours' recess to get some fresh air and a little exercise.

"You're neither," said Thomas.

"I'm not so sure about that," rejoined Henry. "I feel as if I had broken faith with him. Undoubtedly he knows that there was something going on in our room last evening, and for that very reason he called on me for that difficult translation this morning."

"To make you realize that he knew all about it?"

"I think so."

"Kind of a mean trick, I think."

"I don't think so at all," said Henry. "I made certain statements to him which he considered himself entitled to believe. Before the day was over I did things the opposite of what I had led him to believe I would do."

"We urged you not to have your party last night, you know," said Thomas.

"I know it. But let's not argue about that. I did what I felt I had to do, and I'd do it again. Where I made my mistake was in not going to Mr. Halsey and explaining the circumstances to him beforehand."

"That would have taken courage," said Thomas.

"Of course. But if I had done it I wouldn't feel like a hypocrite and a worm to-day. What's more, Mr. Halsey wouldn't consider me a hypocrite and a worm now. I tell you, Thomas, it's hard to tell the truth sometimes, but I really believe it's easier than not telling it. The truth may get you into trouble once in a while, but a lie always does."

Thomas thought about this for a time. "I guess you're right," he said, finally.

"I know I'm right," said Henry.

Then and there he made a resolve, and at his earliest opportunity he took steps to carry it out. As soon as he and Thomas returned to Nassau Hall he went to Mr. Halsey's room and knocked at the door. A cheery voice bade him enter, and he found the tutor seated in front of the open fireplace reading. It was late October and the chill of autumn was in the air, so that the log blaze was extremely welcome.

As Mr. Halsey glanced up at his caller and recognized Henry he gave a slight start of surprise. But he smiled a cordial welcome and rose to his feet.

"Why, Henry," he exclaimed, "I'm delighted to see you."

"Thank you, sir," said Henry nervously.

"Won't you sit down?"

"No thank you," said Henry. "I just came to ask if you would be free this afternoon and would care to take a walk in the country with me."

Mr. Halsey stood with his back to the fire, leaning against the mantelpiece. He looked at

Henry curiously for a moment, and then his face broke into a cordial smile.

"I should like nothing better," he exclaimed heartily. "Will you stop here at my room at three o'clock?"

"Thank you, sir," said Henry.

They conversed but little when they started off that afternoon. It was a glorious, golden October day, the sunlight warm and yellow, the air invigorating, the kind of day that gives one a feeling of peace with all mankind. Every one they met seemed to be happy. The long shady street was mottled with sunlight, shifting patterns of black and yellow, dotted with the brown, red and saffron autumn leaves.

At the head of the street they struck off to the right, across the farm of Mr. Richard Stockton, through his orchard and down the hillside in the direction of Cedar Grove. The hills across the little valley were veiled in a purple mist, softening the rich autumn foliage of the trees. The countryside was a symphony of brown, splashed here and there with the bright red leaves of the sumach and scarlet sage. Peace was everywhere. A turkey buzzard floated on wide wings against the sapphire sky,

rabbits bounced from their path, a woodcock flung himself into the air and hurtled off as they crossed a swampy patch of ground in the hollows.

Soon they came to Pretty Brook and followed its course downstream towards the spot where it joined its happy, chuckling waters with those of Stony Brook. Below a little rapids they found a large flat rock and there they seated themselves, sheltered by a high bank. A kingfisher emerged from his cavern home above their heads and winged his jerky flight upstream in search of food, a splotch of blue green against the brown trees.

Mr. Halsey removed his hat and passed his hand over his forehead.

"Henry," he said, "I'm glad to be alive."

"And I too," said Henry. "Could anything be more beautiful than the autumns we have at Prince Town?"

"Nothing, with the possible exception of the springs," said Mr. Halsey with a laugh.

"Oh, I love it all," said Henry enthusiastically. "It's a wonderful place."

They lapsed into silence, paying heed only to the sights and sounds of Nature; the soft

whispering of the wind in the trees, the gurgle of the water at their feet, the play of the sunlight through the leaves, the dancing patterns on the surface of the brook, the cawing of a crow flying clumsily along overhead,—the combination produced an effect of peace and quiet which it seemed almost a sacrilege to disturb.

But Henry was there for a purpose. With an effort he roused himself from his reverie, sat up straight and looked at Mr. Halsey.

"Mr. Halsey," he said earnestly, "you think I'm a pretty despicable sort of a person, don't you?"

The tutor smiled dryly. "Why, scarcely as bad as that, Henry," he said.

"But you think I lied to you."

"I have been afraid you did not tell me the exact truth, I'll admit."

"Mr. Halsey," exclaimed Henry, "when you came to my room yesterday and we had that talk I had completely forgotten that I had invited some people to come to my room last evening. I remembered it only after you had gone."

"Why didn't you come and tell me about it when you did remember?" Mr. Halsey was

stretched out at full length on the big rock, reclining on his left side, his head resting on his hand. He kept his eyes fixed on Henry's face.

"That's what I should have done," said Henry. "Why I didn't do it I don't know. I was afraid, I guess."

"Afraid of me?" Mr. Halsey looked surprised.

"That's it, I guess."

"I'm sorry to hear it," said the tutor soberly. "I have always felt that a teacher whose students are afraid of him is not a good teacher."

"It wasn't so much a question of you being a teacher that made me afraid," said Henry. "I don't know exactly what it was. I was going to break the rules of the college by having people in my room after hours; I had given you to understand that I was not going to break any more rules, and yet I felt as if under the circumstances I had to stand by my invitations. Two opposite things you see, and somehow my courage forsook me when it came to making a clean breast of the whole thing."

"You were afraid I wouldn't understand?"

Henry hesitated a moment before replying. "Perhaps that was it," he said finally.

"Henry," said Mr. Halsey kindly, "don't ever let such a thing happen again. One thing I have always tried to do is to see the other fellow's point of view. As a teacher I believe that is part of my task. And now that you have explained the circumstances to me I realize the kind of a problem you had to solve last evening. When I heard people going up that rope to your room I confess I was angry. I believed you had deliberately deceived me. In fact, I actually started to go to your room, and got as far as the foot of the stairs before I changed my mind. I stopped because I felt there must be some explanation for your behavior, and I decided to wait until to-day to learn if one was forthcoming. It made me extremely happy to see you come into my room this noon and ask me to walk with you because I knew you were going to explain just how it all happened, and that once again we could be friends and trust each other."

"Do you trust me?" asked Henry dubiously.

"Why of course I do," exclaimed Mr. Halsey. "Why shouldn't I?"

"I failed you once."

"You made a mistake. All men who accom-

plish things in this world do that. President Burr made the mistake of working too hard." He laughed.

"I doubt if I do that," said Henry. "I'm going to do more work during the remainder of my course though than I've ever done before. I promise you that."

"Don't promise me anything," said Mr. Halsey. "I've told you before that I don't believe in promises. I don't believe much in rules either."

"That sounds queer coming from a member of a college faculty," said Henry laughingly. "Why not?"

"Did you ever stop to think of this?" said Mr. Halsey. "If there is but one rule there is only one rule to break. If you have a hundred rules the chances are just one hundred times greater for transgressing some one of them."

"That's true enough," said Henry, "and we have so many rules around here now that no matter how good one's intentions are it is almost impossible to keep from breaking some rule or regulation."

"Exactly so," said Mr. Halsey. "My idea

is to leave it to the boy himself as to how he shall conduct himself. I believe most boys are honorable, and if they are trusted like men they'll conduct themselves like men. Suspect them all the time and pretty soon they'll give you reason to suspect them."

"It's a game," said Henry. "Why, in my own case I know that simply because there are rules I like to see if I can break them and not be caught. I match my wits against the faculty's."

"And beat them usually, I dare say."

"It's not particularly difficult," laughed Henry.

"It never is," said Mr. Halsey. "Any smart boy can fool most men most of the time. It's the boy's game, and a man can scarcely hope to excel at it. He who tries is foolish."

Henry said nothing. He was thinking of Mr. Baldridge's attempt to outwit him, and as the picture of the luckless steward hanging to the rope and the window sill came into his mind he could not help but smile. Mr. Halsey saw the smile.

"Mr. Baldridge for instance," he said.

"It's mean of me to laugh at him," said

Henry. "It was so amusing to see him humble for once in his life though."

"Has he really persecuted you, do you think?"

"I feel sure of it."

"Well," said Mr. Halsey, "you have the upper hand now. I hope you won't persecute him."

"I have gone out of my way to be nice to him to-day," said Henry. "Incidentally he has been nicer to me than I've ever seen him before."

"That's the way of it sometimes," said Mr. Halsey. "It seems as if it were necessary to be hard on some people to make them like you."

"My main concern is the food," said Henry. "I am in hopes that it will improve after last night's performance."

"And I too," said Mr. Halsey. "I eat the same fare as you, you know."

"I hope I have done you a service then," said Henry, laughingly.

"I hope so too," said Mr. Halsey. "Why I sit there in the hall and look up at the portrait of King George and then opposite at the portrait of our late governor, Mr. Belcher, and I wonder how those two portly and well-fed

gentlemen would have appeared if they were obliged to subsist on the food furnished the students at the College of New Jersey by Mr. Simeon Baldridge."

"They would have a lean and hungry look like Cassius in Mr. Shakespeare's play perhaps," laughed Henry.

"No doubt," said Mr. Halsey. "By the way, do you enjoy his plays?"

"Immensely. He is as great a poet as playwright, too, I believe."

"Undoubtedly. As a poet I like John Milton perhaps even better than Shakespeare. For prose give me Joseph Addison. These three are the best of all the moderns to my mind. You should read everything of theirs, Henry."

"I know it. I've wasted my time I'm afraid, but I plan to frequent the library from now on and become better acquainted with not only these gentlemen but many others."

"A fine idea. Our library is not large, but it is well selected and now contains almost twelve hundred volumes. The president is planning to have a catalogue of the volumes printed."

"So I hear. It should be extremely useful and valuable I should say."

"No doubt of it. I am to have charge of the work, which means several trips to Woodbridge to see the printer I suppose."

"Woodbridge is not far from my home."

"Perth Amboy? Yes, I knew you lived there, and it is a lovely spot, too. People say that New York will be the most important port along this section of the coast, but personally I feel that Perth Amboy may win out in the race for honors. I suppose you will go into business there when you graduate."

"That is my father's wish," said Henry.

"Carry it out then if possible," said Mr. Halsey. "Incidentally you are a lucky boy to have a father with a business waiting to take you in."

"I guess I am," said Henry soberly, "though I must confess I have never thought a great deal about it. I haven't thought a great deal about much of anything, to tell the truth."

"Thinking won't hurt you any," said Mr. Halsey with a smile. "Try it."

"I shall," said Henry.

CHAPTER XXI

A SUSPECT

Henry Stirling did as he had said he would. He commenced to think. Previous to his talk with Mr. Halsey he had taken things more or less for granted, accepted whatever came along as a matter of course. Now he began to ask himself questions when something happened he did not understand. Why is such and such a thing as it is? What makes it so? He sought the reason and he sought diligently. As is usually the case with diligent searchers, he found what he was looking for, and never before had he known such real satisfaction as he now obtained from the knowledge of work thoroughly done.

He prepared his lessons carefully and conscientiously, with the result that he did not fail in his recitations any more. No longer did he go into a class and sit nervously through it, painfully wondering if he was to be called upon to recite, and be obliged to give a public exhibition of his unpreparedness. Now he welcomed

a call to recite, and the subjects he previously had regarded as boresome and uninteresting he found to be the exact reverse, simply because he knew something about them.

"Studies are like people," said Mr. Halsey when he and Henry were discussing this point one day. "Our first impression of them is liable to be unfavorable, but the better acquainted with them we become the better we like them, and the more we realize how many attractive and interesting qualities they have."

Henry did not spend all his time in study. He did take life more seriously than before, however, and he did not spend hours plotting ways and means to break the college rules as he was wont to do formerly.

Shortly after his talk with Mr. Halsey an organ was presented to the college. On it were played the hymns for morning and evening prayers each day and for the Sunday services. George Dodd conceived the bright idea of stuffing paper in about one-third of the pipes so that when the organist tried to play his efforts would be rewarded with results disconcerting to him and highly amusing to the students. He was

surprised and rather hurt when Henry declined his invitation to participate in this enterprise.

"You're getting to be hopeless," he said.

"On the contrary," said Henry, "for the first time since I have been a student at Nassau Hall I am beginning to have hopes of myself."

"You've lost all your spirit," countered George.

"No," said Henry, "I merely have it under control and am striving to direct it into the proper channels."

George looked at him quizzically for a moment without speaking.

"Do I look differently," inquired Henry with a laugh.

"I was trying to see," said George.

"I don't think I've gone insane," said Henry.

"Perhaps I am crazy myself," said George. "I was just wondering what you were going to do from now till graduation. Nothing but study? Aren't you planning to have any more fun?"

"I am planning to have more than ever," said Henry. "Moreover, I do not intend to do noth-

ing but study, but I'm going to make study my first concern. When that is done I'll be ready for almost anything."

"But you won't help me fix the organ?"

"No, George. I'm going to behave,—for a while anyway."

"I suppose you won't even laugh when I have stuffed paper in the pipes and Mr. Hopkins tries to play."

"I'll laugh if the result is amusing."

"Henry, you are becoming spiritless," said George with a sigh. "All I can say is I'm thankful I knew you when you were a man, before you took the vow of eternal good conduct. You used to be a nice young fellow, but now,—" George held up his hands in despair.

"Oh get out of here," laughed Henry. "You pose as a roué and a loafer and you pretend you do no work, but you don't fool me. You study hard and you know it. Perhaps you don't admit it, but it's so just the same."

"I don't care to argue with you," said George, rising from his chair and going to the window. "From now on you are beneath my notice."

"That's splendid," cried Henry with a laugh.

"Now you'll let me alone and I shall be able to get some work done."

George turned and fixed Henry with his glance.

"Worm," he said, and stalked out of the room.

Henry chuckled as the door closed behind his friend and he settled himself comfortably by the window with a copy of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which he had procured from the library. For a long time he read, forgetting everything else, losing himself completely in Bottom's antics and the spell of William Shakespeare's musical lines. After a time he looked up from his book and glancing out of the window spied George and Thomas Spencer under a tree on the back campus, deep in conversation.

"Aha," he thought, "no doubt the organ plot is being hatched," and for a moment he wished he had allowed himself to be included with the conspirators. He sat with the book on his lap, staring straight ahead, thinking. He went over in his mind all that he had done since he had come to Nassau Hall, and he tried to decide whether his time had been profitably spent or

wasted. He had made some wonderful friends and that is worth while always. John Ayres was closest of all of them and Henry dreaded the idea of their separating at graduation and not seeing each other again. Perth Amboy and Philadelphia were sixty miles apart, too long and too difficult a journey to permit of more than infrequent visits. He would miss his other friends too, Thomas, George, Samuel and Hugh, —all of them. But he would not have given up the four years passed with them for anything in the world. Just to have gained their affection and friendship made his college career worth while. Yet Henry had regrets. He felt that he had not made the most of his opportunities for study and self-improvement. He had dodged work and sought pleasure and it was only now that his senior year was half over that he suddenly realized that the sweetest pleasures of life are gained as the result of work. It was not too late yet to put this knowledge to practical use. To show that he was serious he laid aside his copy of Shakespeare and picked up Cicero's Orations and was soon deeply engrossed in the smooth-flowing Latin.

The following evening after supper the col-

lege assembled in the hall for prayers. President Davies stood on the platform, his Bible open at the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John. The good man was in fine spirits and he smiled benignly at the more than four score young faces gathered before him. The students liked and respected President Davies and were always well behaved in his presence, something which can not always be said of them when under the guidance or supervision of some of the other members of the faculty.

Henry had been busy all the afternoon preparing an oration he was to deliver the following day. Once a month was oration day when members of the senior class were obliged to deliver an oration of their own composition before an audience composed of students, members of the faculty and invited guests from the town. Henry's turn came on the succeeding day, and as President Davies stood up to announce the opening hymn he was reciting to himself the oration he had written. His mind was far away from the service and he had forgotten all about George's scheme for stopping up some of the organ pipes and thereby adding zest to the evening's devotional meeting. He

was therefore scarcely conscious at first that a disturbance was taking place.

The hymn had been announced and Mr. Hopkins at the keyboard had pulled out the proper stops, pushed others in and started to play. The results were remarkable, not to say startling. The first chord he struck sounded far differently than he had expected it to sound, and equally removed from the way the composer of the hymn had written it. Some of the pipes being stopped up with paper only a portion of the keys struck yielded forth any sound. And what a sound it was. Hugh Harris said later that he thought some one must have stepped on a cat that had somehow wandered into the hall. At any rate a blood-shivering discord emerged from the instrument which was intended to produce music. Mr. Hopkins removed his fingers from the keys. A titter ran around the room. Then Henry suddenly woke up to a realization of what was happening, he forgot his oration completely and like a flash his old love of pranks came back to him. He looked eagerly at Mr. Hopkins and President Davies to see what effect the strange sound had had on them.

Mr. Hopkins seemed puzzled. He gazed at the keyboard as if he were not quite sure whether to believe his ears or not. President Davies, the same kind of puzzled look on his face, was gazing at Mr. Hopkins and the organ, seemingly under the impression that some accident had occurred and that the organist had inadvertently struck the wrong notes. Mr. Hopkins thought he would try again anyway. He turned sideways towards the students, gave them the little nod he always gave when he was ready to commence, and again he struck the keys. The same barbaric shriek issued from the organ as before. Mr. Hopkins was determined to make a thorough test this time, however, and he went hopefully on, apparently under the delusion that presently the instrument would get control of itself and function properly.

No such thing happened. Instead of one discord there were ten. Wails, moans and shrieks rent the air. Pandemonium broke loose. The students shouted, stamped on the floor and emitted sounds even more unearthly, if such a thing were possible, than those that came from the abused musical instrument.

Henry was convulsed with laughter. He felt sorry for President Davies and Mr. Hopkins, but the outcome of the plot struck him as about the funniest thing he had ever witnessed, and he laughed, and laughed, and laughed. President Davies, white-lipped and plainly furiously angry stood stiffly behind the desk and rapped loudly for order. Mr. Hopkins had risen from his seat and stood facing the students, his hands twitching and his eyes flashing.

Henry rocked back and forth in his seat and laughed until he was weak. Tears streamed from his eyes and he ached from laughter. Why he should consider this prank so funny he could not have said, but as often happens an insignificant event or occurrence will tickle our risibilities far more than something which in itself may be far more humorous. The other students laughed too, though not as heartily as Henry.

They had preferred to add to the general confusion by caterwauling, barking like dogs, whistling, anything that would add noise to the occasion. Henry had done none of this. His part had been entirely an involuntary one, for he

could no more have helped laughing than breathing.

When the noise began to die away he wiped his eyes and looked about the room. To his surprise most of the students were looking at him, President Davies was gazing directly at him, as was Mr. Hopkins, and from the side of the room he met the glance of Simeon Baldridge.

Henry flushed crimson. "I've laughed so hard they think I'm responsible I suppose," he muttered to himself. He was serious now and sat back in his seat, trying to compose himself and appear unconcerned.

President Davies had not spoken. He stood quietly waiting for all the noise to subside, and it was only when complete order was restored that he spoke.

"Mr. Stirling," said President Davies looking straight at Henry, "you seem highly amused by the recent disgraceful performance."

The room was deathly still and Henry could feel all eyes fixed upon him. He did not know what to say.

"Yes, sir," he stammered finally.

"Why were you so amused?"

"I don't know, sir," said Henry, and he spoke the truth.

At this juncture Mr. Baldridge stepped forward. "Perhaps, sir," he said addressing President Davies, "he was delighted because his experiment was so successful." He turned and leered at Henry.

At these words Henry turned pale and started to rise from his seat. He was being accused before the whole colloge, accused unjustly by a man for whom he had no respect, and he grew so angry that red spots danced before his eyes. His first impulse was to rush at this accuser, seize him by the throat and make him apologize publicly. Then he regained control of himself and sank back limply into his seat. President Davies addressed some other remark to him which he did not hear, and consequently did not answer. His head was buzzing, a thousand wheels seemed to be whirring in his ears and he was practically oblivious to all that was going on about him.

"You did not answer my question, sir," he heard President Davies say sternly.

Henry roused himself with an effort.

"I did not hear it, sir," he said.

"I will talk to you at my home in half an hour," said President Davies. "Meanwhile you may go to your room."

Henry rose to his feet blindly and stumbled down the aisle towards the door. As he went out he heard faintly as from a great distance, President Davies announce the singing of a hymn to be rendered without the organ accompaniment.

CHAPTER XXII

A TALK WITH THE PRESIDENT

Henry entered his room and threw himself face downwards on the bed, his face buried in his hands. For a long time he did not stir. He could not think, for his mind was clouded as by some evil dream and his thoughts were disconnected and confused. He felt discouraged and hopeless. He had been making an honest effort to do the right thing and now he seemed to be in more serious trouble than ever before.

He got to his feet and dragged himself over to the window, leaned his forehead against the pane and pressed his hands to his throbbing temples. He was in a dripping perspiration and yet he shook as if with the ague.

"What's the use?" he muttered.

He looked out into the trees in the rear of Nassau Hall and above them at the stars which were just beginning to twinkle in the darkening sky. And as always happened with Henry, the contemplation of Nature tended to restore his

peace of mind so that it was not long before his heart ceased beating so violently and his brow began to cool. A stern feeling of resentment against Mr. Baldridge stole into his breast, however, and as he thought of the mean insinuation of the steward he ground his teeth and clenched his fists until his fingers showed red and white.

"The swine."

He had just applied this appellation to Mr. Baldridge and was considering how peculiarly appropriate it was when there came a knock at the door.

Henry turned his back to the window.

"Come in," he said.

The door opened and Mr. Halsey entered. He closed the door softly behind him and stood for a moment without speaking, his eyes intent on Henry. Then he suddenly advanced towards him with outstretched hands.

"Henry," he exclaimed, "I can't tell you how sorry I am that you have been placed in this position."

"You think I'm not guilty?"

"I'm sure of it," said Mr. Halsey.

For the first time since he had been a little

boy Henry wanted to cry. For a moment he could say nothing, for something rose up in his throat and choked him. He swallowed hard.

"Thank you, sir," he mumbled finally.

"Everything will be straightened out in no time," said Mr. Halsey. "Don't worry about it for a minute. Don't blame President Davies too much either. He was obliged to act as he did."

"I realize that I think," said Henry. "But Baldridge—. The swine."

Mr. Halsey laughed. "Forget about him," he advised.

"I wish I could," cried Henry angrily. "It's hard to forget a thing like that though. When you knocked at my door I was just wondering if it paid to be decent and do the right thing. I was invited to help in stopping up the organ pipes and called spineless for my refusal. Now I am blamed for it anyway."

"Unfair, I'll admit," said Mr. Halsey soberly. "But don't get cynical. You are right in this matter and that fact will be known. Run along over to the President's house now and tell him you are innocent."

"Will he believe me?" asked Henry doubtfully.

"Of course he will. I've already told him so."

"You're a good friend, Mr. Halsey," said Henry. "I can't tell you how much I appreciate your help and support."

"Don't try. Hurry along now or you'll be late."

Henry picked up his cap and passing out of the door turned to his left towards the stairway at the western end of the hallway. At the top of the stairs he found George Dodd waiting for him.

"Henry," said George quickly, "you know you have my permission to tell who did it in case you have to."

"All right, George," said Henry with a laugh. "You know what the chances are of my doing that though."

"Seriously," George insisted. "You're not to take the blame for this affair in any way. If some one is to suffer you're not to be the one."

"Leave that with me," said Henry, and started down the stairs.

He opened the door at the end of the building and turned towards The Broad Street on which the President's house faced. There was a light shining through the window of the study on the ground floor, and a moment later Henry lifted the brass knocker and announced his presence. President Davies himself answered the summons and opening the door ushered Henry into his study. A fire of pine knots blazed in the fireplace and two large candles were burning on the top of the table.

Cap in hand Henry entered and then he stopped short as he recognized the figure of a man seated in a chair at one end of the room. He turned sharply around.

"President Davies," he said, "is it necessary that Mr. Baldridge be present?"

"He is here at my request," said the President.

Henry merely bowed his head slightly and offered no comment. He stood beside the hearth, twirling his cap in his hand, his eyes fixed on President Davies. He ignored Mr. Baldridge completely. President Davies also remained standing. A tall clock in the corner ticked

loudly and its wooden works whirred and rattled; the fire snapped merrily. Otherwise there was no sound in the room.

"Mr. Stirling," said President Davies finally, "you were present at prayers this evening when that disgraceful disturbance took place."

"Yes, sir," said Henry.

"Do you know who was responsible for it?"

Henry hesitated a moment. He wondered if he was to be asked the names of the conspirators, and then and there he made a silent vow to himself that in his conscious moments he never would tell. It was a mean trick to ask him anyway, he felt.

"Yes, sir," he replied.

He thought he heard a sound from Mr. Baldridge's direction at this, a sound something like a chuckle of satisfaction.

"Were you responsible for it in any way yourself?"

"No, sir," said Henry promptly.

"I'm glad to hear it," said President Davies. He turned to Mr. Baldridge. "This straightforward declaration of Mr. Stirling's will undoubtedly satisfy you that your suspicions were unfounded, Mr. Baldridge," he said. "I know

you are as pleased as I am, for Mr. Stirling is of the best type of our students, and you and I both would have been grieved if in his last year he had done anything to spoil the splendid record he is making. Now if you will excuse us I should like to have a little talk with Mr. Stirling alone."

This was a turn of affairs Henry had not expected. He blushed crimson, and felt more uncomfortable than ever, for praise was one thing he did not like. There was something on this occasion to make his embarrassment less unpleasant than usual, however. Mr. Baldridge was plainly as surprised as Henry at President Davies' words. He rose hurriedly to his feet, opened his mouth as if to protest, and then seeing the smiling face of the president, changed his mind, and without a word flung himself out of the room. The outside door closed behind him and President Davies and Henry were left alone.

"I owe you an apology, Mr. Stirling," said President Davies.

"Not at all, sir," said Henry. "Everything is extremely satisfactory so far as I am concerned."

The president smiled. "You and Mr. Baldridge are not the warmest of friends, are you?" he said.

"He has never liked me," Henry replied quietly.

"Nor you him."

"No, sir."

"He will not bother you again I think," said President Davies. "Provided of course that you give him no cause to do so."

"You can be assured that I shall not," said Henry earnestly. "I want no more trouble if I can help it."

"I'm sure of that," said the President. "I have only good reports of you recently and I want you to know that I am your friend. I shall consider it a compliment if you will come to me with your problems and allow me to help you solve them."

"Thank you, sir," said Henry.

President Davies held out his hand. "I hope we shall get to know each other better," he said, as Henry started to go.

"I hope so too," said Henry.

He was about to cross the threshold when President Davies suddenly turned to him and

said, "What are you planning to do when you graduate?"

"Why," said Henry, "I really haven't decided definitely. Sometimes I think I'll join the army, then I decide farming is a fine occupation for a gentleman, and again I think I'll go into business with my father."

"He is a merchant at Perth Amboy, I believe."

"Yes, sir."

"You think you would like business?"

"Not very much; no, sir. But it seems the easiest solution of the question and I know father would like to have me with him. He believes Perth Amboy will be a great port some day, he is most enthusiastic about the future of the town, and thinks what he has to offer me presents a wonderful opportunity."

"No doubt he's right," said President Davies. "Have you ever given serious thought to entering the ministry?"

"Why I've thought about it, of course," said Henry. "One cannot very well help it here at Nassau Hall where nine out of every ten boys seem pointed in that direction."

"It's a noble profession."

"Yes, sir," said Henry. "Of course it is, but it does not seem to me that I am suited to it by temperament."

"It needs red-blooded young men like you," said President Davies, "and I like to see the educated youth of our new country enter the professions. The professions usually furnish the leaders, and if we get our college boys to practice them we are assuring ourselves of the right kind of leaders it seems to me. A minister's life is a hard one of course whether he have a parish or go out as a missionary. Think of our friend David Brainerd, what wonderful work he has done. A saint I call him."

The President gazed at Henry intently, his forehead wrinkled and his eyes peering through his bushy brows. Suddenly he pointed his finger at him.

"Why don't you study law?" he demanded.

"Do you think I could make a lawyer of myself?" asked Henry with a smile.

"You can make anything of yourself you want," said President Davies emphatically. "That part doesn't worry me in the least. The only trouble with you is you won't work unless you are interested."

"Mr. Halsey got me interested in my college work," said Henry.

"Perhaps Mr. Blackstone can get you interested in law," observed the President with a laugh. "Have you ever read his book?"

"No, sir."

"I'll loan it to you," cried President Davies. He turned to the book case in one corner of the room and brought out a large volume bound in leather and handsomely printed. He handed it to Henry. "Take it over to your room and read it. It is the story of the English common law, one of the finest things to my mind that civilization has yet produced. It is based on the age-old freedom of the Anglo-Saxons and if you don't read that book and want to be a lawyer I miss my guess. The more I think about it the more I believe you are intended for the legal profession."

"I should like very much to read the book anyway," said Henry.

"Do, and come and tell me what you think of it when you have finished. Good night."

He shook Henry's hand once again, and held the door open for him to pass outside.

"What a curious evening I've spent," mused

Henry as he walked the short distance back to Nassau Hall. He felt better mentally, however, than he had ever felt before. The President of the college had actually praised him, told him he was the type of boy he was proud of, and he had told him he was making a fine record, too. Henry could hardly wait to get pen and paper and write his father the good news. Busied with these thoughts he opened the door at the west end of Nassau Hall. As he entered he passed Mr. Baldridge, who was coming out.

Henry murmured an apology and stood aside. The steward brushed by without a word. Henry started to go in and then he was suddenly seized by an impulse to follow Mr. Baldridge and see where he went. He put the copy of Mr. Blackstone's book on the ground beside the building and followed silently after the steward.

CHAPTER XXIII

HENRY WRITES A NOTE

Henry skulked along, Indian fashion, gliding silently and swiftly from tree to tree, but always keeping the shadowy figure of the steward in sight. Mr. Baldridge himself seemed to be proceeding stealthily. Every moment or so he stopped and looked back as if in fear of being followed. He did not discover Henry, however, for a friendly Delaware Indian had taught him woodcraft when he was a small boy, and one of the things he had learned best of all was to move silently and unseen.

Mr. Baldridge came to The Broad Street, crossed over and turned to his left. Henry did not cross, but kept watch from the opposite side. Why he was following the steward he could not have told. Some impulse he did not understand or try to analyze urged him on. Anyway it was a game and he enjoyed it.

The street was deserted. It was half after nine o'clock and nearly all the houses along the

quiet thoroughfare were dark. Lights showed faintly in the second stories of some of them as their occupants lighted their way to bed, but most people had already retired. Only in the inn a hundred yards or so up the street were there signs of activity and life. The windows of the taproom glowed yellow and sounds of revelry issued from within. Some one was singing a song and as Mr. Baldridge drew near, and Henry opposite, the singer finished amid shouts of approval.

Then a strange thing happened. At least it was unexpected as far as Henry was concerned. He saw Mr. Baldridge stop just before he came to the inn, saw him glance all around, seemingly hesitate for a moment and then suddenly dart into the stable yard. Henry waited several moments for him to reappear and finally when there was no sign of him decided to investigate.

He crossed the road quickly, keeping a sharp eye out for any sign of a stray passerby. He saw no one and presently found himself in the inn yard under the windows of the taproom. The noise within seemed to grow louder and louder. The songs became more frequent, the

jests noisier, the laughter more and more ribald. Henry clung closely to the side of the inn, listening to the voices, wondering if he could recognize any of them. His old friend Jason Work had been ordered away, but he still knew many of the loiterers and ne'er-do-wells who frequented the taproom.

"Where were you last night?" he heard some one ask. "You're going to be fined if you're absent again."

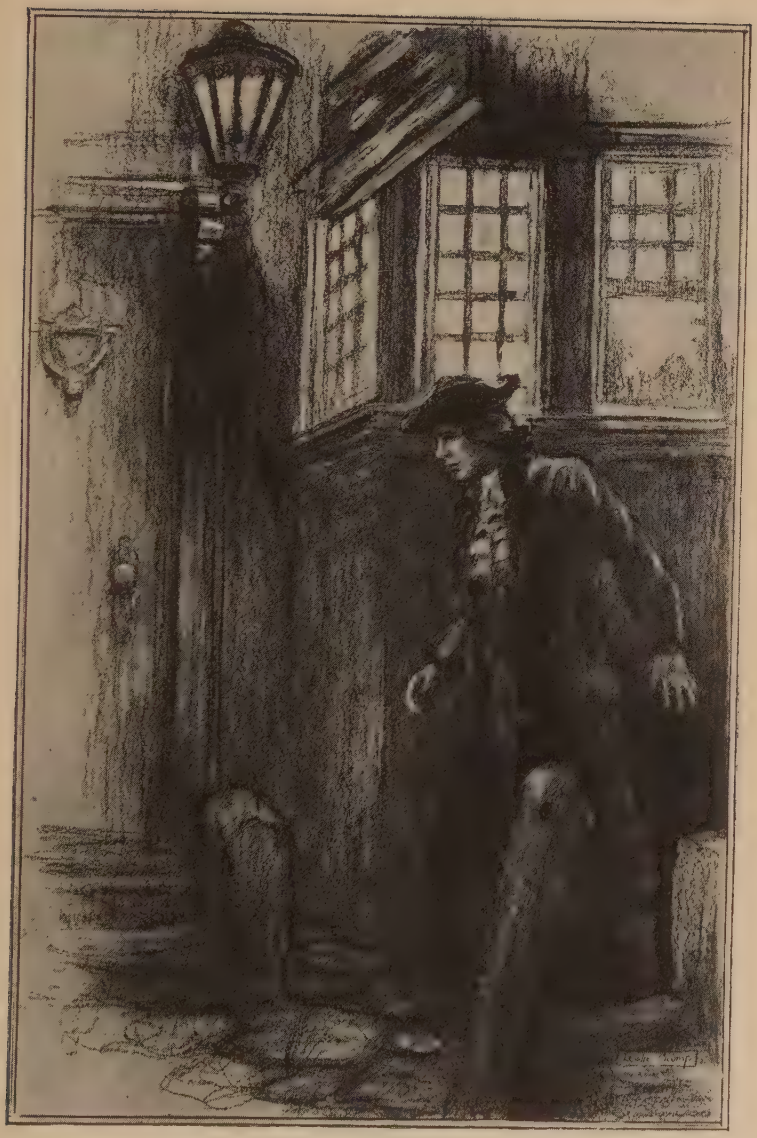
"Couldn't get away."

Henry started violently for it was the voice of Simeon Baldridge replying to the question.

"Cooking for your boys, I suppose," said the first speaker. A general laugh greeted this remark which plainly was intended to be facetious.

"Too drunk more likely," said some one else. Shouts of merriment greeted this sally.

"The old hypocrite," muttered Henry in astonishment. His amazement was followed quickly by a feeling of joy, for now he was sure the steward would never trouble him again. This time he had obtained information which would cost Mr. Baldridge his place if he cared to divulge it. "I've got him now," he mur-



Henry clung closely to the side of the inn listening to the voices

mured gleefully to himself. "Once and for all."

He listened for more conversation and was certain beyond the shadow of a doubt that it was the steward whose voice he heard. What was more, the steward, who always posed as a model of virtue, and who had no mercy on students who lapsed from grace seemed from the tone of the conversation to be one of the leading spirits in the gathering inside.

"Sing that song you sang last Saturday," some one urged him.

"Repeat that story about the girl and the mouse," said another.

So it went. The talk drifting out to Henry's eager ears stamped his old enemy as one of the most frequent visitors to the taproom, and one of the most popular of the entertainers who gravitated to that spot.

"As a matter of fact I'd like him for it if he weren't such a hypocrite and didn't always pose as being so virtuous," said Henry to himself. "Under the circumstances I believe it's my duty to acquaint him with the fact that I know all about his habits." He chuckled to himself and leaving his hiding place under the windows went

around to the front and entered. A sleepy colored boy was the only occupant of the room and Henry had some difficulty in making him understand what it was he wanted. The boy partially woke up after several moments, however, and brought Henry a sheet of paper, ink and a quill pen.

Henry seized these articles eagerly and seating himself at the table where a candle was burning wrote as follows:

"Dear Mr. Baldridge,—

"I can scarcely express my pleasure at seeing you enjoy yourself so thoroughly. It gives me great pleasure too to learn that you are a frequent visitor here, for I believe it will lead to your taking a different attitude towards the students under your supervision.

"I remain, sir,

"Your Devoted Admirer,

"HENRY STIRLING."

Henry blew on the ink and waved the sheet of paper in the air. When he was convinced that the ink was thoroughly dry he folded the sheet of paper carefully and holding it in his hand rose to his feet. The colored boy mean-

while had sunk back into a doze on his bench by the fireplace.

Henry unfolded the note and reread it. It seemed to afford him great pleasure for he chuckled audibly as he folded it again. He immediately assumed an extremely serious air, however, and note in hand started for the taproom. A gust of noise, mixed with tobacco smoke and the smell of ale greeted him as he pushed open the door. The room seemed to be crowded and in the general disorder and confusion his presence was not noted. He stood quietly at the end of the room for a moment to get his bearings, and find the person for whom he was searching. Presently he spied him.

Mr. Baldridge was leaning against the bar, holding a pipe of tobacco in one hand and a mug of ale in the other. Henry walked swiftly down the room until he stood directly behind the unsuspecting steward.

"Is Mr. Simeon Baldridge here?" he asked in a loud voice.

Every one in the room ceased talking as Henry spoke. The steward started, and turned around. When his eyes fell on Henry he nearly dropped his pipe and his mug of ale; his jaw

dropped and he stared open-mouthed, too astonished to speak.

"Ah, Mr. Baldridge," exclaimed Henry cheerily. "A note for you."

He handed the folded paper to the steward, turned on his heel and walked out of the room without a word being spoken to him. As the door of the taproom closed behind him he quickened his pace and once outdoors he broke into a run. A few moments later he had arrived back at Nassau Hall, recovered his copy of Blackstone and was mounting the stairway to the second floor.

"President Davies said he didn't believe Mr. Baldridge would bother me again," he exclaimed gleefully to John as he recounted his adventures to him. "I guess he won't either."

"Probably not," laughed John.

"Provided I 'give him no cause to do so,' was what the president said," continued Henry. "Personally I feel that I have given him cause not to do so."

"No doubt of it," said John. "You need never worry about old Baldridge again. You have put him in his place once and for all."

"We mustn't tell anybody about this evening though," said Henry seriously. "I don't want to make trouble for anybody if I can help it, even Baldridge."

"Well you know you can trust me," said John.

CHAPTER XXIV

HENRY GRADUATES

HENRY gave much thought to President Davies' recommendation that he study law. He talked the matter over with Mr. Halsey and found that he agreed with the President. Henry read Blackstone and was fascinated by it. He got all the law books from the library he could find and became more and more interested and enthusiastic. On a visit to Perth Amboy he discussed with his father the possibility of his becoming a member of the legal profession and somewhat to his surprise found his father entirely favorable to the idea. His friends at Nassau Hall approved of it thoroughly.

"Next to the ministry," said John, "it is the greatest of all professions."

"Poetry is nobler than any of them," exclaimed Hugh.

"Would you like to have me repeat a poem I heard read at supper one night two or three years ago?" asked Samuel.

"I remember that poem," George Dodd exclaimed, winking at Henry. "Recite it for us, Sam."

"Please excuse me if he does," laughed Hugh. "I'm ashamed of that effort now."

At all events Henry soon made up his mind to study law and President Davies arranged for him to read with Judge Leonard of Newark after he had graduated. The decision made, he threw himself into his work with more zest than ever and as all his friends and tutors had prophesied on numerous occasions, he became a distinct success as a student. He still had battles with himself when the beautiful spring days returned to Prince Town, and Nature dressed herself in her shimmering green frocks, but he did not lose these battles any more. His duty was his duty and he always did it. In consequence his self-respect increased and he was held in high esteem by all with whom he came in contact. He kept at his work steadily through the hot summer and acquitted himself with honor when the final examinations were held in September before Commencement. How well he did is witnessed by the fact that at the

Commencement exercises he was chosen to take part in one of the debates.

That was a day long to be remembered. Thomas Boone, who had been appointed Governor of New Jersey the previous year, was present. The trustees of the College were there of course, besides an extremely large gathering of other distinguished persons from the adjacent towns and provinces. As to what happened perhaps it is just as well to let one of the newspapers which published an account of the proceedings tell the story. The following report therefore is taken from the "Pennsylvania Gazette" of October 9, 1760.

"Prince Town, Nassau Hall, September 25, 1760. Yesterday the Anniversary Commencement of the College was held here. The Procession of the Trustees and candidates from the President's House to Nassau Hall began at the Ringing of the Bell precisely at 10 o'clock in the forenoon. The Order was, The Candidates for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts first, two and two, uncovered; the Candidates for the Degree of Master of Arts followed next uncovered; and the Trustees, according to their Seniority, the youngest first, and the Governor

and President last, concluded. When the Candidates arrived at the steps of the Middle Entrance into the hall they stopt, and the whole Procession divided itself equally on each side of the gravel Walk, and entered in an inverted Order. The Collegiate Exercises began with a handsome Salutatory Oration in Latin, pronounced by Mr. Thomas Spencer; then followed a Latin Syllogistick Dispute, wherein the Respondent held that '*Sermo primitus ab Inspiratione divina Originem duxit,*' which was well maintained and opposed. When this was concluded, Mr. Hugh Harris arose, and in a very sprightly and entertaining Manner delivered an ingenious English Harangue in Praise of Oratory. Then succeeded a Forensick Dispute in English, in which it was held that 'The Elegance of an Oration much consists in the Words being consonant to the Sense.' The Respondent Mr. Henry Stirling acquitted himself with universal applause in the elegant Composition and Delivery of his Defence; and his Opponent answered him with Humor and Pertinency. This was succeeded by a Latin Dispute in a Socratick Way, in which the Respondent affirmed that '*Systema Ethicæ perfectum in præsenti*

Hominum Conditione sine Ope divinæ Revelationis, construi nequit;' and by a well-composed Valedictory Oration in English by Mr. John Ayres. The Singing of an Ode on Science, composed by the President of the College, concluded the Forenoon Exercises.

"The Entertainment in the Afternoon began with the Address to His Excellency the Governor by Mr. Stockton in the Name of the Trustees. After which the Candidates for the Master's Degree disputed in Latin the following Question: '*An Rector civilis ullam, in Rebus Fidei, Potestatem habeat,*' and '*Nonne absurdum est Deum immutabilem precari,*' which were learnedly defended and ingeniously opposed. The President then descended from the Rostrum, and with the usual Formalities conferred the Degrees of the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts.

"Mr. Joseph Treat, one of the Masters of Arts and a Tutor in the College, then ascended, and delivered an elegant, pathetic Valedictory Oration in English, in the Close of which he very handsomely touched upon the present flourishing State of our Public Affairs in North America. The Singing of an Ode on Peace com-

posed by the President concluded the whole, to the Universal Pleasure and Satisfaction of a numerous Auditory."

Thus Henry's college career came to an end. He had finished well and it is the finish that counts. The finish would have been reached more easily no doubt if he had kept up as he had gone along and not placed his reliance on a well-timed spurt to make up the lost ground; Henry realized this, but he could well feel that his college career had been successful. Even Simeon Baldridge told him so.

"Mr. Stirling," he said, "you have done well. Now that you are leaving I want you to know that I shall miss you. We have had our tiffs, but I have always felt, and feel now, that given half a chance we should have been wonderful friends."

Henry thought so too. The morning following Henry's discovery of Mr. Baldridge in the taproom the steward had come to him and they had had a long talk, a talk which made Henry understand many things he had had no ideas about before. Mr. Baldridge appeared in an entirely new and favorable light and Henry for

the first time regretted the animosity he had displayed towards the steward, and the delight he had experienced in seeing him in trouble. So it usually happens in this life. Nine times out of ten if we dislike people it is because we do not know them. There are many good qualities in everybody if we take the trouble to discover what they are. The way to do this is by getting to know the people themselves. Meanwhile we should make allowances for seeming faults. Henry realized the justice and truth of this fact after his talk with Mr. Baldridge and swore to himself that from that time on he would judge no one harshly until he was absolutely sure of his ground.

"Even then I'd probably be wrong," he said to himself.

Henry and his intimate friends wound up their college careers with a dinner at the inn. Besides Henry there were present Hugh Harris, George Dodd, John Ayres, Thomas Spencer, Samuel Pierson, Ezra Whitaker and, as a specially invited guest, Mr. Halsey. Old times were gone over, and plans for the future discussed. One thing they promised one another,

and that was that God willing they would return to Nassau Hall for Commencement once in every five years and renew their friendships in person.

"A friend," said Henry, "and believe me I do not mean to be sentimental, is the dearest possession a man can have. There is no greater compliment than to have some one want you as a friend. All of us here want one another as friends and therefore we are all the recipients of great compliments. Let us show our appreciation by every one of us striving to be worthy of them, and further to live up to the letter of our promises by returning here to Nassau Hall once in every five years."

He raised his glass.

"Gentlemen, I give you Nassau Hall."

With one accord every one sprang to his feet. They drank the toast in silence and sat down. For several moments no one spoke, for lumps seemed to have formed in their throats which interfered with speech, and every eye was misty. It was the end, and the fact that they must part came home to them with full force now. Finally John spoke.

"Henry," he said, "I have been thinking over

what you said about a friend being the dearest possession a man can have. I agree with those sentiments and I hate the idea of losing my friends. To-morrow we part."

"Does that mean you will lose your friends?" asked Henry.

"We shall not see one another except at long intervals."

"John," said Henry, "I look at the matter this way. If I have a real friend I propose to keep him. A separation cannot take him from me, neither can the lapse of time. Once a friend always a friend is my motto."

"Hear, hear," cried Mr. Halsey.

Hugh sprang to his feet his glass held aloft.

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, "I wish to propose a toast."

Applause greeted him.

"I give you Henry Stirling," he continued, "a true gentleman, and a true friend."